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THE
HUNDRED GREATEST MEN

PORTRAITS

OF THE
ONE HUNDRED GREATEST MEN OF HISTORY

REPRODUCED FROM FINE AND RARE STEEL ENGRAVINGS

VOLUME I

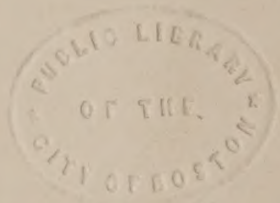
Poetry

POETS, DRAMATISTS, NOVELISTS

LONDON
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CROWN BUILDINGS, 188 FLEET STREET

1879

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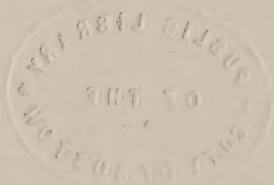
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Wallace Wood

PREFACE

IN the preparation of the present work an attempt has been made to separate the facts of civilisation into classes, and to gather together in each class the portraits of the few great leaders who, from the beginning of history down to the present time, have been its representatives. In one of these classes appear Homer, Dante, and Shakspeare; in another, Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon; in another, Archimedes, Galileo, and Newton. In each class—Poetry, Art, Religion, Philosophy, History, Science, Politics, Industry—from fifteen to twenty portraits, arranged in chronological order, and each portrait accompanied by a carefully-written biography.

There is a growing belief that no interest in the world can ever equal the interest felt in human beings. However much we may become absorbed in the study of facts and theories, and in the enjoyment of works of art, we must in the end ever turn with an eye of the deepest interest to the men who have illustrated these facts, propounded these theories, and given us these works. We always want the portraits of those we admire and venerate. There is no inspiration so powerful as that derived from the frequent study of a great example.

Apart from these considerations, such a collection ought to make a fascinating and beautiful work, and also one peculiarly instructive; each volume, in fact, presents virtually a special course of history, and this in the most vivid and graphic form. Vol. I. is a history of Poetry, Vol. II. a history of Art, and so on; while the eight classes taken together offer a complete history of mankind—a picture of human progress in all its departments. This effect will be heightened by the introductions, which are intended to serve as links uniting the different biographies together.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK

BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THE Spanish historians tell us that it was not any of the wild and unknown animals or fruit or even the silver and gold of the new world, but the wild *man*, that concentrated the curiosity of the contemporaries of Columbus. And we all of us remember in the charming account of the prince of the Pelew Islands, brought in the last century into England, that what most of all the splendid shows of London fastened his eye with mystery of joy, was the mirror in which he saw himself. In like manner it is not the monster, it is not the remote and unknown, which can ever powerfully work on the human mind; the way to touch all the springs of wonder in us is to get before our eyes as thought, that which we are feeling and doing. The things that we do we think not. What I am I cannot describe any more than I can see my eyes. The moment another describes to me that man I am—pictures to me in words that which I was feeling and doing, I am struck with surprise. I am sensible of a keen delight. I be, and I see my being, at the same time. The soul glances from itself to the picture with lively pleasure. Behold what was in me, out of me! Behold the subjective now objective. Behold the spirit embodied.

What does every earnest man seek in the deep instinct of society, from his first fellowship—a child with children at play—up to the heroic cravings of friendship and love—what but to find himself in another mind: because such is the law of his being that only can he find out his own secret through the instrumentality of another mind. We hail with gladness this new acquisition of ourselves. That man I must follow, for he has a part of me; and I follow him that I may acquire myself.

The great are our better selves, ourselves with advantages. It is the only platform on which all men can meet. If you deal with a vulgar mind, life is reduced to beggary. He makes me rich, him I call Plutus, who shows me that every man is mine, and every faculty is mine—who does not impoverish me in praising Plato, but contrariwise is adding assets to my inventory.

An ethereal sea ebbs and flows, surges and washes hither and thither, carrying its whole virtue into every creek and inlet which it bathes. To this sea every human house has a water-front. Every truth is a power. Every idea from the moment of its emergence begins to gather material forces—after a little while makes itself known. It works first on thoughts, then on things; makes feet, and afterwards shoes; first hands, then gloves; makes men, and so the age and its material soon after. The history of the world is nothing but a procession of clothed ideas. As certainly as water falls in rain on the tops of mountains, and runs down into valleys, plains, and pits, so does thought fall first in the best minds, and runs down from class to class, until it reaches the masses and works revolutions.

The Universal Man is now coming to be a real being in the individual mind, as once the Devil was. All questions touching human life the daily press now discusses. I will not say that there is no darker side to the picture, or that what is gained in universality is not lost in enthusiasm. We have in the race the sketch of a man which no individual comes up to. I figure to myself the world as a hollow temple, and each several mind as an exponent of some sacred part therein; each a jet of flame affixed to some capital, or triglyph, or rosette, bringing out its significance to the eye by its shining.

We delight in heroes, but we can hardly call them a class: for the essence of heroism is that it takes the man out of all class. We call them providential men. They draw multitudes and nations after them, as the nation shares the idea that inspires them. I know the pure examples are few; a few benefactors scattered along history to make the earth sweet. For the most part, the mud of temperament clouds the purity, and we see this sheathed omnipotence in characters we cannot otherwise respect. They show their legitimate prerogative in nothing more than their power to misguide us. For the perverted great derange and deject us, and perplex ages with their fame.

The great men of the past did not slide by any fortune into their high place. They have been selected by the severest of all judges, Time. As the snow melts in April, so has this mountain lost in every generation a new fragment. Every year new particles have dropped into the flood as the mind found them wanting in permanent interest, until only the Titans remain.

Nothing good, nothing grand has been withheld. The ages of Time, the resources of Being play into our tutelage. Here the world yields to us its soul. To our insight old sages live again. The old revolutions find correspondence in the experiences of the mind. Wonderful spiritual natures like pryncedoms and potentates stand bending around us. Each one of the century represents a department of life and thought.

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME I.

THE men who are the flower and glory of our race are to pass here before us, the highest manifestations, whether on this line or on that, of the force which stirs in every one of us—the chief poets, artists, religious founders, philosophers, historians, scholars, orators, warriors, statesmen, voyagers, leaders in mechanical invention and industry, who have appeared amongst mankind. And the poets are to pass first. Why? Because, of the various modes of manifestation through which the human spirit pours its force, theirs is the most adequate and happy.

The fact of this superior adequacy of poetry is very widely felt; and, whether distinctly seized or no, is the root of poetry's boundless popularity and power. The reason for the fact has again and again been made an object of inquiry. Partial explanations of it have been produced. Aristotle declared poetry to be more philosophical and of more serious worth than history, because poetry deals with generals, history with particulars. Aristotle's idea is expanded by Bacon, after his own fashion, who extols poetry as "submitting the shews of things to the desires of the mind," to the desires for "a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things." No man, however, can fully draw out the reasons why the human spirit feels itself to attain to a more adequate and satisfying expression in poetry than in any other of its modes of activity. For to draw them out fully we should have to go behind our own nature itself, and that we can none of us do. Portions of them we may seize, but not more; Aristotle and Bacon themselves have not succeeded in seizing more than portions of them. And at one time, probably, and to one set of observers, one ground of the primordial and incontestable fact before us comes clearest into light; at another, and to other observers, another.

For us to-day, what ground of the superiority of poetry is the most evident, the most notable? Surely its solidity. Already we have seen Aristotle prefer it to history on this very ground. Poetry has, says he, a higher wisdom and a more serious worth than history. Compare poetry with other efforts of the human spirit besides history. Compare it with art. It is more intellectual than art, more interpretative. Along with the plastic representation it utters the idea, it thinks. Poetry is often called art, and poets are classed with painters and sculptors as artists. But Goethe has with profound truth insisted on the difference between them. "Poetry is held to be art," he says, "and yet it is not, as art is, mechanism, mechanical. I deny poetry to be an art. Neither is it a science. Poetry is to be called neither art nor science, but genius." Poetry is less artistic than the arts, but in closer correspondence with the intelligential nature of man, who is defined, as we know, to be "a thinking animal;" poetry thinks, and the arts do not.

But it thinks emotionally, and herein it differs from science, and is more of a stay to us. Poetry gives the idea, but it gives it touched with beauty, heightened by emotion. This is what we feel to be interpretative for us, to satisfy us—thought, but thought invested with beauty, with emotion. Science thinks, but not emotionally. It adds thought to thought, accumulates the elements of a synthesis which will never be complete until it is touched with beauty and emotion; and when it is touched with these, it has passed out of the sphere of science, it has felt the fashioning hand of the poet. So true is this, that the more the follower of science is a complete man, the more he will feel the refreshment of poetry as giving him a satisfaction which our nature is always desiring, but to which his science can never bring him. And the more an artist, on the other hand, is a complete man, the higher he will appreciate the reach and effectualness which poetry gains by being, in Goethe's words, not art but genius; by being from its very nature forbidden to limit itself to the sphere of plastic representation, by being forced to talk and to think.

Poetry, then, is more of a stay to us than art or science. It is more explicative than art, and it has the emotion which to science is wanting. But the grand sources of explication and emotion, in the popular opinion, are philosophy and religion. Philosophy—the love of wisdom—is indeed a

noble and immortal aspiration in man. But the philosophies, the constructions of systematic thought which have arisen in the endeavour to satisfy this aspiration, are so perishable that to call up the memory of them is to pass in review man's failures. We have mentioned Goethe, the poet of that land of philosophies, Germany. What a series of philosophic systems has Germany seen since the birth of Goethe! and what sort of a stay is any one of them compared with the poetry of Germany's one great poet? So necessary, indeed, and so often shown by experience, is the want of solidity in constructions of this kind, that it argues, one may say, a dash of the pedant in a man to approach them, except perhaps in the ardour of extreme youth, with any confidence. And the one philosopher who has known how to give to such constructions, not indeed solidity, but charm, is Plato, the poet among philosophers, who produces his abstractions like the rest, but produces them more than half in play and with a smile.

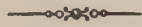
And religion? The reign of religion as morality touched with emotion is indeed indestructible. But religion as men commonly conceive it—religion depending on the historicalness of certain supposed facts, on the authority of certain received traditions, on the validity of certain accredited dogmas—how much of this religion can be deemed unalterably secure? Not a dogma that does not threaten to dissolve, not a tradition that is not shaken, not a fact which has its historical character free from question. Compare the stability of Shakspeare with the stability of the Thirty-Nine Articles! Our religion has materialised itself in the fact—the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact. For poetry the idea is everything; the rest is its world of illusion, of divine illusion; it attaches its emotion to the idea, the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious poetry. The future of poetry is immense, because in conscious poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

LIST OF PORTRAITS

IN THE

FIRST VOLUME



HOMER

PINDAR

ÆSCHYLUS

SOPHOCLES

EURIPIDES

ARISTOPHANES

MENANDER

LUCRETIVS

VIRGIL

DANTE

RABELAIS

CERVANTES

SHAKSPEARE

MILTON

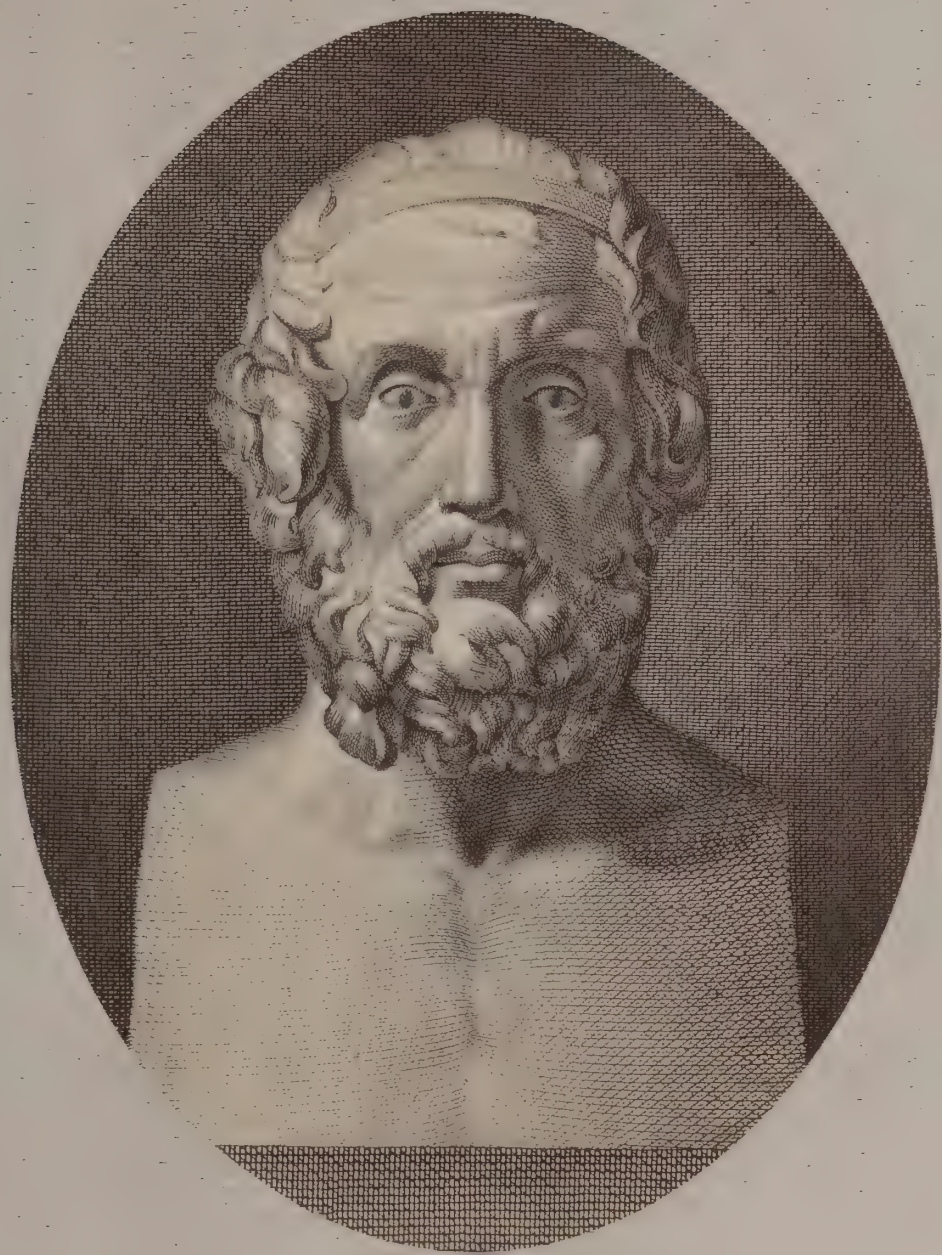
MOLIÈRE

GOETHE

SCOTT.



HOMER
THE TOWNLY



HOMER

IXTH CENTURY B.C.

THE FATHER OF POETS

EVERY nation has its heroic age, and every heroic age has its bard, who sings its bold exploits. Such was Homer for the heroic age of Greece.

The reputed author of the two greatest Greek poems is supposed to have lived upon the west coast of Asia Minor, the home of the Ionic branch of the Hellenic race. His date is given by Herodotus as four hundred years before his own time, that is in the ninth century B.C. The epic poets of that time were itinerant minstrels, or rhapsodists, who recited their poems at the courts of kings, not unlike the trouveres or minstrels of the middle ages. Homer is represented as old, blind, and a beggar wandering from place to place. The poems of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" were not written, but preserved in the memory, and handed down as a tradition from one rhapsodist to another. Before a nation has history it has romance; and poetry always precedes prose.

It is needless to tell again the charming old story of the beautiful Helen and the cowardly Paris, of the haughty Agamemnon and the brave Achilles, of the noble Hector and the crafty Ulysses. Goethe finds in the two chief characters of the work two great fundamental forms of human

nature—Achilles the most brave, and Ulysses the most prudent of men. The fact that the “*Iliad*” has for twenty-five centuries retained its hold on the human mind is probably due to the masterly delineation of its chief personage, the youthful Achilles, whose intense love of a fight, great generosity, and affection for his friend, who is killed in the combat, force him to break his oath of remaining aloof, when the most munificent offers of wealth and spoil had failed to move him.

“Son of Atreus,” says the repentant hero, “this would surely have been somewhat better for both thee and me. . . . When we two, grieved at heart, raged with soul-devouring contention for the sake of a girl. . . . But let us leave these things as past, although grieved, subduing from necessity the stirrings within our bosoms. And now I terminate my wrath, nor is it at all fit that I always obstinately be enraged—but come, quickly incite the long-haired Achæans to battle, in order that once more I may make trial of the Trojans going against them.”


Achilles is the grand pagan hero, the ideal of antiquity. It is in Chants I., VIII., XI., and those following, where he shines forth, and these constitute the epic par excellence, the *Achillêis*, the pith and soul of the poem.

The “*Odyssey*” paints a heroism of a different order. It has been said that the “*Iliad*” is a poem for men, and the “*Odyssey*” a poem for women. In the latter we have the crafty character of Ulysses, brought out by twenty years’ wanderings and perilous adventure, while his patient Penelope nightly unravels her web. She indeed has stood as the type of the true and faithful wife throughout all the ages.

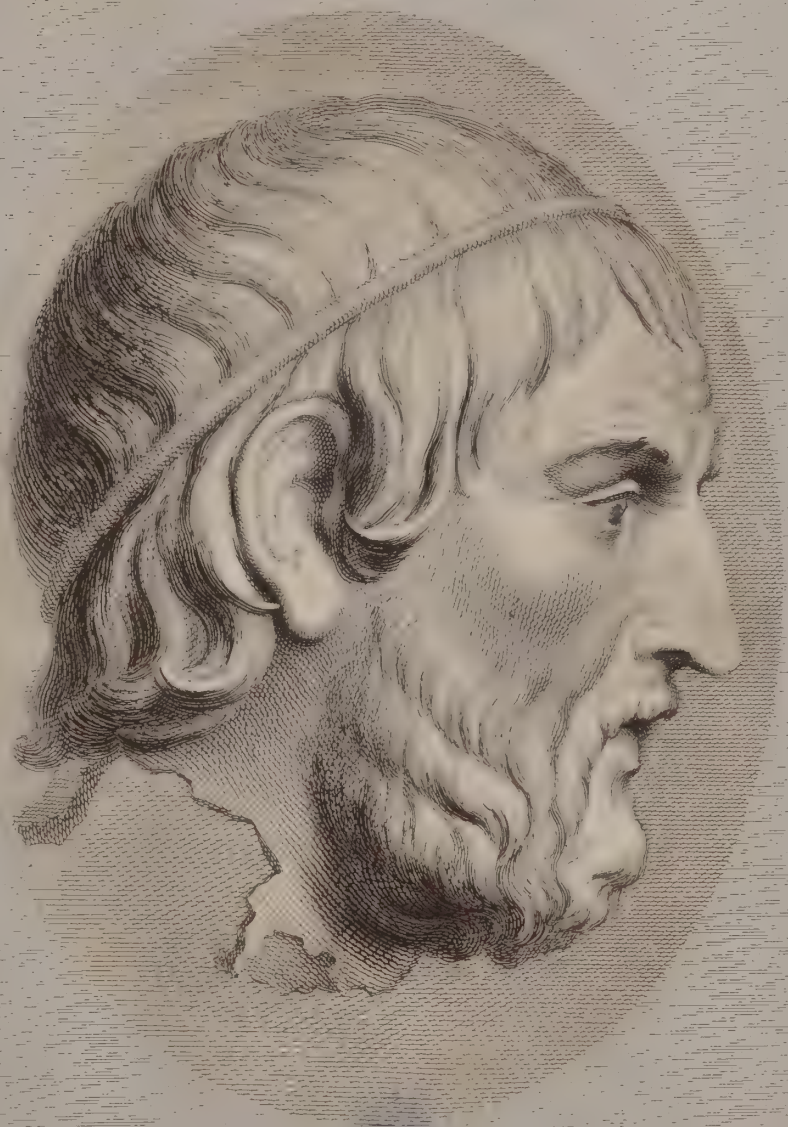
After the Bible no book has been so universally read as Homer’s “*Iliad*”; it has been called the bible of heroes, and it was the bible of the ancient Greeks.

“Just as we read the Hebrew history to our children, much more from a moral than a historical attitude, and give to all the facts a didactic turn, so the old Greeks read Homer as a moral work, containing models of what we ought to be, exhibitions of punished vice and meanness, examples of fortitude, of temperance, of justice, and of wisdom.”

However incredible such a view may appear—for to us, as Christians of to-day, the perusal of the “*Iliad*” is calculated to convey anything but the idea of morality—it is certainly true for the earlier ages of the Greek civili-



HOMER



sation, and again for its latter days. In Plato's time, on the other hand, the ethic and philosophic period, standing midway between the two, the effect of Homer and the pagan poets was held by sages to be pernicious. A few hundred years later, when the method of interpretation became that of symbolism, St. Basil, one of the great fathers, declared that the direct aim of Homer was to delineate virtue. Still later, from the time of Dante on, Homer is simply the unapproachable poet and artist. This view persisted throughout Europe down to the French Revolution. The epoch of electricity and steam brings out another; Homer is regarded from a scientific point of view. As Mr. Gladstone says: "The poems of Homer do not constitute merely a great item of the splendid literature of Greece, but they have a separate position which none other can approach. They and the manners they describe constitute a world of their own. . . . a scheme of human life and character complete in all its parts. We are introduced to man in every relation of which he is capable, in every one of his arts, devices, institutions, in the entire circle of his experience. There is no other author whose case is analogous to this, or of whom it can be said that the study of him is not a mere matter of literary criticism, but a full study of life in every one of its departments. To rescue this circle from inadequate conceptions, and to lay the ground for a true idea of them, I have proposed the term "Homerology."

So the work of the minstrel after its thousands of years transmigration has at last found its true place. It is no longer a gospel from which to read our children moral lessons, it is no longer the inimitable model for artists, it is a document for men of science.

The two favourite portraits of "blind old Homer" are the Townley bust upon the lower floor, and the exquisite bronze head in the second vase room, of the British Museum. The face is that of a beautiful old man, with regular features, deep sunken eyes and cheeks, and lips of ineffable sweetness.

This face is one of the finest productions of antique sculpture. Is it the face of Homer? Was there ever a Homer? Concerning the "Iliad," modern criticism maintains that far from being a perfect work of art, it is but an archaic production, a patchwork made up of two, perhaps more, pieces, written by no one man, being the spontaneous outgrowth of the naive poetic sense of a whole people; that it is totally different in kind

from the "Inferno," the "Jerusalem Delivered," and the "Paradise Lost;" from the "Ænead," the "Lusiad," the "Henriad," and all the others.

Accepting this view, still the bust of Homer will continue to stand upon its high pedestal. Say that the poem was the work of the minstrels, the Greek rhapsodists. Homer is to us their representative, the incarnation of their spirit; no longer a simple individual he becomes a type, rightly called "the Father of Poets."

PINDAR

518-439 B.C.

GREATEST LYRIC POET

PINDAR was born in a village near Thebes; he was a contemporary of Æschylus, and was in the prime of his age at the time of the Persian war. Of his parentage little is known with certainty. At thirteen he was sent to Athens to be educated, and was taught song-writing by the poets of his time. In his twentieth year he contested the prize for poetry at Thebes; at first unsuccessfully. Like the other lyric poets of his time, he travelled from village to village in Greece, offering his services for public or private ceremonies; but Athens was his favourite abode. He frequently visited Delphi, where, in later times, an iron chair was shown as the one he occupied when making his poetic offerings to the gods.

When the Persian invasion was at an end, Thebes, which had allied itself with the Persians, was taken by the Athenians, and many of its leading citizens were put to death as traitors to Greece. Pindar took refuge at Syracuse, at that time the residence of many poets and philosophers, whom Hieron the Tyrant had gathered about him. Four years after, he returned to Thebes and appears to have remained there till his death, in his eightieth year.

The veneration of the Greeks for Pindar has surrounded his cradle and his tomb with legends, legends which at least attest that his countrymen considered him an essentially religious poet, loved by the gods for his piety. His faith has not the child-like simplicity of the early Greek poets. It is more grave and pure, and rises to general views; not limited to the worship of one sect, or to the special divinities of one village or temple. In patriotism he was equally liberal-viewed, and called himself a citizen, not of Thebes, but of Greece. He did not refuse to write odes for princes whom the Greeks called tyrants; but it must be admitted that he never praised other than honourable actions, and more often wrote good counsel than eulogy. The Greeks are unanimous in regarding him as the prince of lyric poets, and declared that he excelled in every branch of his art. Of all his works, accident, rather perhaps than their superior merit, has preserved to our time only his songs of victory; but these are sufficient to stamp his genius as one of the most original and striking in Greek poesy.

During a period of two centuries poets had abandoned epic recitals which were merely an echo of the past, and appealed directly to the living present, to the interests, sentiments, and passions of their contemporaries. This poetry, a poetry of maxims, was full of grave lessons, exhortations to combat, and praises of peaceful enjoyments of civilisation. Dramatic poetry was in a state of transition, gradually disengaging itself from its primitive epic form, and approaching by successive steps the new form to be finally given it by the genius of Æschylus and Sophocles.

The merit and originality of Pindar lies in having united these two elements together—the axiomatic and the dramatic. Living as it were in a period of transition, he combined in the ode the wisdom of his predecessors with something of the interest and varied character of the drama. To Pindar, a song of victory was not a mere description of a hero of the Olympian games, and praises of his skill in the arena. He took the whole life of the man, and everything pertaining to it, his ancestry, and nativity, as a subject; an individual is not an isolated object, he belonged to a family, a city, a race.

Thus viewed, the poet's choice of material became illimitable. He had all the theology, history, and traditions of Greece at his disposal, and used the victory merely as a centre of interest to give unity to his ode. The poet usually took some general moral idea inspired by the actual events of the

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A faint, circular illustration in the background, possibly depicting a classical figure or a symbolic scene, rendered in a light, sketchy style.

PINDAR

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victory, an idea in harmony with the leading incidents in the life of the victor, and applied it in such a way as to serve as a lesson in prosperity, a consolation in misfortune, or an encouragement to goodness and piety. The idea supplied him with moral themes which he developed for the honour or instruction of his hero, tempering his eulogies with grave reflections on the instability of fortune, the fragility of human grandeur, and the omnipotence of the gods.

Pindar sometimes used simple and familiar language, but he had a taste for complex metaphors with subtle and obscure allusions, which require a mental effort to comprehend. He would place before his readers veritable poetic enigmas to sharpen their curiosity and develop a desire to solve them. The rhythmic and musical forms he gave to his odes appear to have been not less remarkable for their variety and excellence than the subjects themselves. Each song had its special tone depending chiefly on the nature of the rhythm and the musical style. The latter was divided into three classes:—Doric, Eolian and Lydian, easily distinguished, though each admitted innumerable variations. One of Pindar's commentators, Boeckh, has endeavoured to reconstitute the poet's rhythm, but the effort, though admirable, fails to reveal to us all the secrets of Pindar's harmonic skill.

"The causes which determined Pindar's poetical character, are to be sought in a period previous to the Persian War, and in the Doric and Æolic parts of Greece rather than in Athens: and thus we may separate Pindar from his contemporary Æschylus, by placing the former at the close of the early period, the latter at the head of the new period of literature. The poems of Pindar show that he was penetrated with a strong religious feeling. He had not imbibed any of the scepticism which began to take root at Athens after the close of the Persian War."

"Near his own house at Thebes he dedicated a shrine to the Mother of the Gods. Often he was to be found in the temple of Apollo; there, seated in his iron chair, he sang his songs to the shining deity."

ÆSCHYLUS

525-456 B.C.

FOUNDER OF THE DRAMA

FIRST GREAT TRAGIC POET

BEFORE the time of Æschylus, there was no real theatre. Greek tragedy as he found it was simply a poem, recited or chanted by one speaker; it was declamation without action, scenery, or accessories of any kind. Æschylus introduced dialogue; invented the tragic boot, mask, and mantle; dressed the speakers in character; and turned the platform into a mimic representation of the place or scene where the event was supposed to occur.

What was the origin of the drama? Before there was such a thing in the world as "drama," there existed "chorus;" the drama grew out of the improvised recitations, given in the intervals of the Bacchic choruses sung at the great festivals. While the chorus rested, the leader chanted a long monologue in praise of Bacchus: this was the first stage of development. In a later age, a second person was brought upon the platform, who replied to the first, and this made "dialogue," and was the foundation of tragic art. Finally, another actor was added, and still others; the dialogue which was at first but a recitative and an accessory, grew little by little till it usurped the principal place. In our day, it employs many

actors, while the old chorus, which was once all in all, has dwindled away, the only vestige of it remaining in what is now called the orchestra. The greatest step in the gradual change was the transition from monologue to dialogue, and this took place in the time of Æschylus.

That which in Æschylus chiefly strikes us is grandeur of idea. The solemn religious influences of Eleusis, the place of his birth, and those of that great political movement, the Persian war, are visible in his works. Before he was a poet he was a soldier. Born of a noble family, he distinguished himself at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea; and it was on the field of battle, where his country was fighting against fearful odds for its very existence, that he drew the warlike inspiration of his muse. His play of the "Persians" brings the subject of that great struggle itself upon the stage; and his "Seven against Thebes" "breathed the spirit of Mars," and "every one who read it would long to be a warrior."

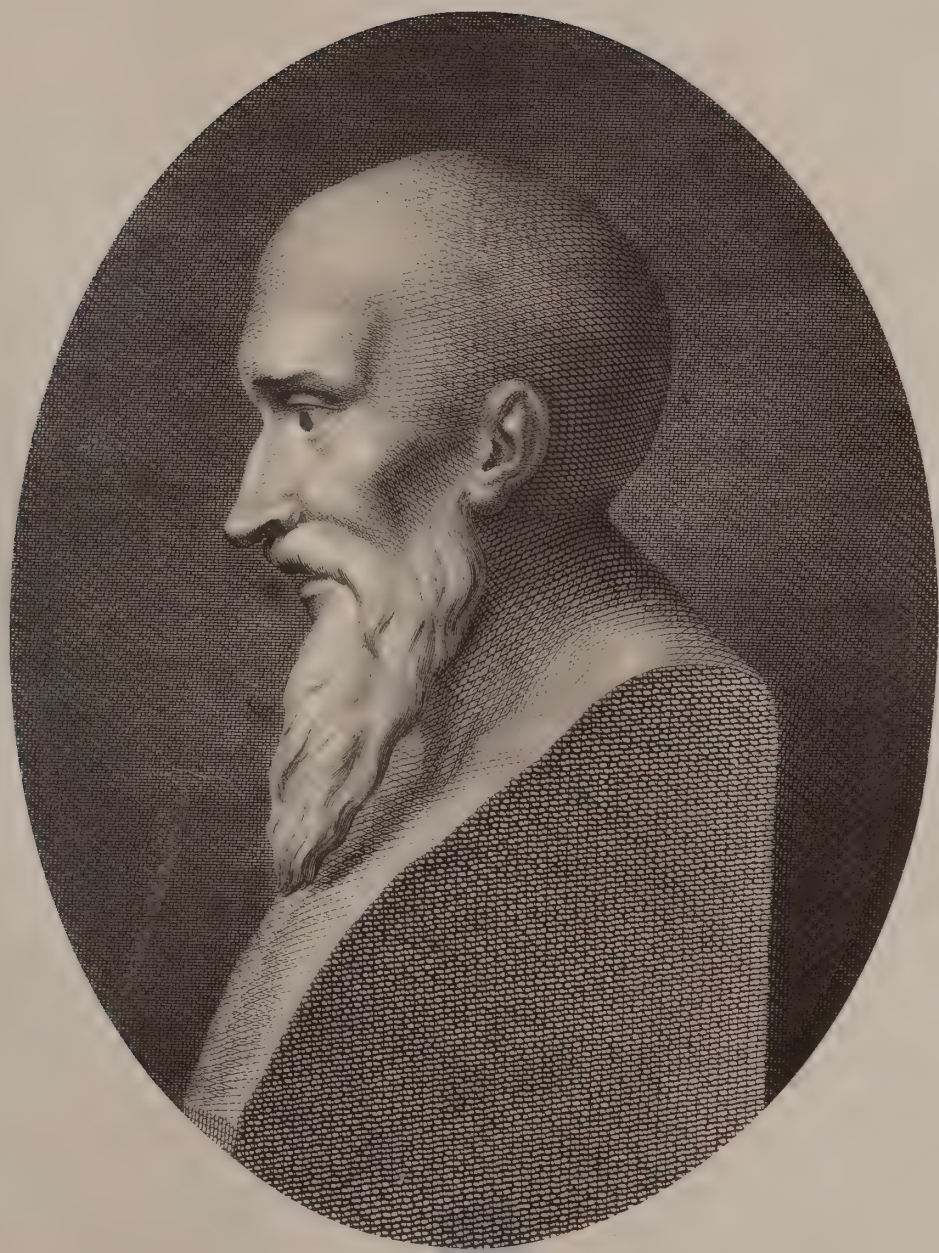
This is one of his chief works. Another, the "Prometheus Bound," perhaps his greatest, is of a religious cast, showing the wrath of the mighty gods against the unhappy hero, who had offended them by befriending man. The same is true of his last, the "Oresteia," that terrible story of the returning husband, Agamemnon, slain by the wife, Clytæmnestra; the son, Orestes, avenging his father's death, and for the deed pursued by furies; driven from land to land; till at last, in the good city of Athens, he finds rest, the furies for ever appeased, and from thenceforth called Eumenides, the soothed ones, foreshadowing in this the dawn of a milder age.

The poet survived his generation. For many years chief among Athenian poets, he was at last supplanted by the younger Sophocles, and withdrew to the court of the Tyrant of Syracuse, where he died. All will remember the legend of the eagle, dropping a tortoise upon his traditionally bald pate, taking it for a rock. The artists of antiquity drew his portrait with the head entirely bare, yet wearing a long luxuriant beard tapering to a point, the features of the face full of beauty and manly vigour.

From "The Frogs," of Aristophanes, a play in which both Æschylus and Euripides are caricatured, we might be inclined to receive the idea that the former was of a haughty and irritable temper—the man of the stern old times, out of patience with the modern days so different from his own. In this play he is made to ask Euripides—



ÆSCHYLUS



"Answer me, for what ought we to admire a poet?"

Euripides answers, "For cleverness and instruction; and because he makes the people in the cities better."

Æschylus resumes: "And if you have not done this, but from good and noble characters have rendered them most knavish, what will you say you are deserving to suffer?"

Euripides replies that such an offence would be worthy of death.

The old man then breaks forth upon him—

"Observe what sort of men you received them from me; tall, noble fellows, and not citizens that shirk all state burdens, nor loungers in the market, nor rogues as they are now, nor villains; but breathing of spears and lances and seven-fold courage."

"And by having done what, did you teach them to be so noble-minded?"

"By having composed a drama full of martial spirit."

"Of what kind?"

"The 'Seven against Thebes.' Every man that read it would long to be a warrior."

The compositions of Æschylus have the peculiarities of all initiative works of art. If we compare them with any modern drama, we are amazed at the loftiness of the subjects, the extreme simplicity of the action, and the ruggedness of the style.

And yet he was a great artist. A great artist finding his art crude, and without rules, by the force of prodigious genius bringing it into organisation, and giving it laws. Chorus is replaced by actors; the long monologue turned into spirited dialogue; the brutal representation of murder no longer takes place before the eyes of the spectators, but behind the scenes; rude speech rises to sublime declamation; a noble exterior is given to the actors by appropriate dress, increased height, and heroic gesture. For all this the Greeks have called him, "The Father of Tragedy."

ÆSCHYLUS

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE

B.C.

525 BORN AT ELEUSIS.

499	FIRST EXHIBITED	AGE	26
490	AT BATTLE OF MARATHON	„	35
484	GAINED HIS FIRST PRIZE	„	41
480	AT BATTLES OF ARTEMISIUM AND SALAMIS	„	45
479	AT BATTLE OF PLATAEA	„	46
472	‘PERSAE’	„	53
471	VISITED HIERON OF SYRACUSE; ‘SEPTEM CONTRA THEBAS’	„	54
468	DEFEATED BY SOPHOCLES; RETIRED TO SYRACUSE	„	57
461	‘SUPPLICES’	„	64
458	EXHIBITED IN ATHENS AGAIN; RETIRED TO SICILY; THE ‘ORESTEIA’	„	67
456	DIED AT GELA	„	69

SOPHOCLES

495-405 B.C.

SECOND GREAT TRAGIC POET

SOPHOCLES, one of the greatest of Greek poets, was born at the village of Colonus, in Attica. He received a liberal education, more especially in music and poetry, made rapid progress, and won many school prizes. At fifteen he was chosen to lead the chorus which sang the pæan after the battle of Salamis; and at twenty-seven, boldly entered the lists to compete with Æschylus himself, in the tragic drama, winning the prize.

This brilliant victory, followed by other successes, put Sophocles in the first rank of Athenian poets, more especially after the death of Æschylus; for his greatest rival, Euripides, though popular in Greece, was less a favourite with the Athenians. The latter, to signify their esteem for the poet, chose him several times as one of the ten magistrates or *strategi* elected annually to govern the State; and, in company with Pericles, he took part in the campaign against the Island of Samos, which had revolted against Athens; but Sophocles was more poet than soldier, if we may believe his contemporaries. He is made to say at a banquet that Pericles had little esteem for his strategy.

Sophocles was married twice, and had two sons, who, if report is true, were not noted for kind-heartedness or filial love; yet the father

was most amiable in disposition, and lived on terms of friendship with all his fellow-citizens, and even his rivals, Æschylus and Euripides. "He knew how to enjoy life and renounce pleasure no longer suitable to his age." He died at ninety, beloved and honoured.

Of the 113 plays attributed to Sophocles, seven only are extant.

"Antigone," a political tragedy, contrasts the rights of the State with those of the family. In this play, a king, Creon, refuses burial to a prince killed in fighting against his own countrymen. The warrior's sister, Antigone, performs the funereal rites, and is condemned by Creon to be imprisoned in a cavern, where she dies of hunger. The son of the king, Hæmon, is the intended husband of Antigone; he pleads unavailingly for her, and in despair commits suicide; his mother, Eurydice, dies of grief; and thus the king for his cruelty is punished by loss of both wife and child.

In the "Electra," Sophocles has taken the sombre legend of Orestes, and shown with incomparable talent the passions, sentiments, and motives which prompted Electra to become the instigator and accomplice of her brother in the murder of their father.

The "Trachinian Woman" has for a subject the death of Hercules, killed by the poisoned tunic sent him by his jealous wife, Dejanira. Here the poet has described the passionate feelings of the wife in a manner far superior to the rough sketchiness of Æschylus in his play, the "Oresteiaë."

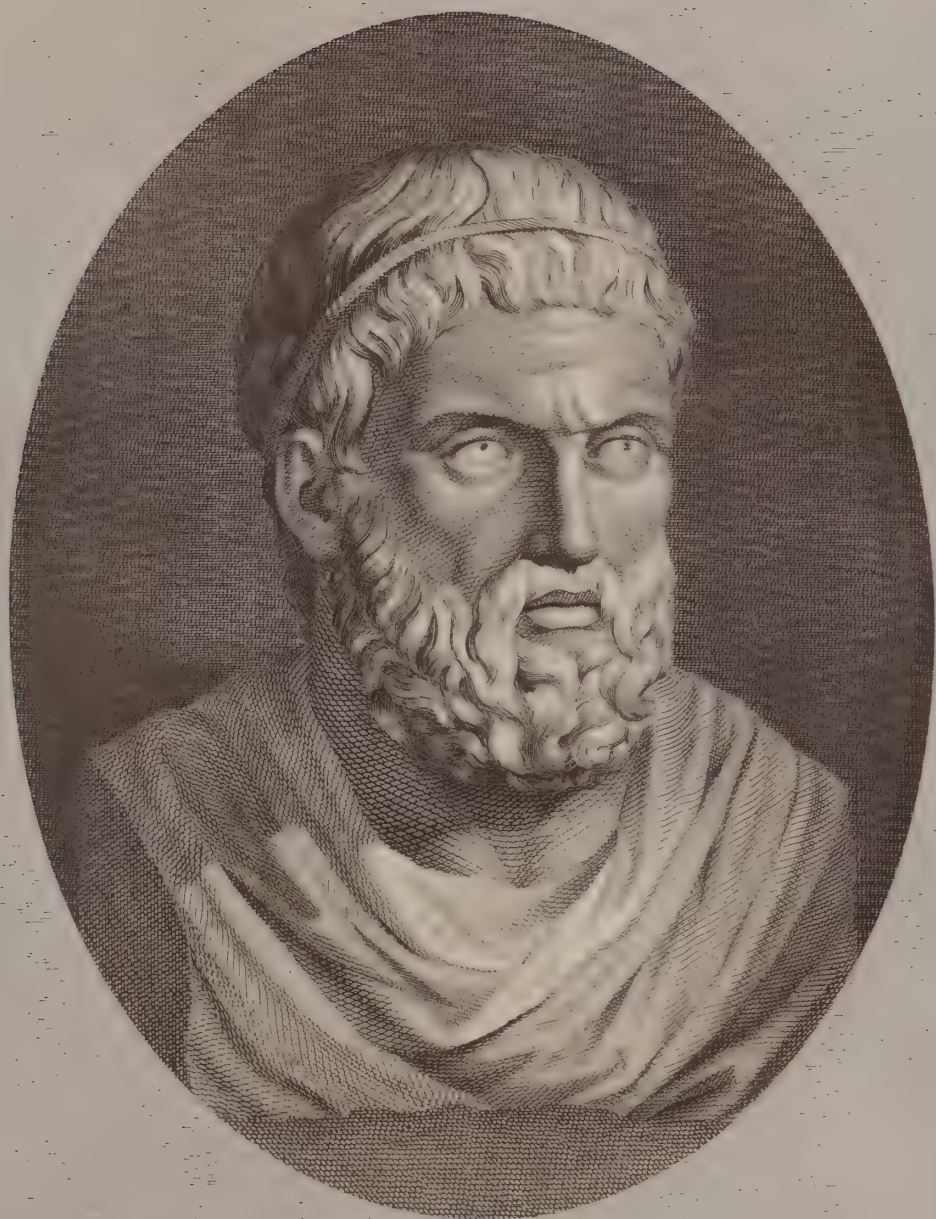
"King Œdipus" is the story of a King of Thebes, condemned by fate to see his people die of pestilence for an unexpiated crime. He discovers that this crime is his own: he had unwittingly murdered his father and married his mother. He plucks out his eyes, which had so failed to guide him aright on the road of life, and flees into exile. The play is one of the best examples of the Greek drama.

"Ajax" exhibits a man punished by the gods for his excessive pride by fits of madness. He dies of shame at the thought of the unworthy acts committed while mad, and his death expiates his fault.

In "Philoctetes," there is a moral conflict between three characters, Philoctetes, Ulysses, and Neoptolemus. The latter refuses to go so far in duplicity as Ulysses has proposed, in order to persuade Philoctetes to return and assist the Greeks. The consequences are becoming serious, when the

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SOPHOCLES



gods intervene and put an end to the strife. The art of Sophocles and his knowledge of human nature are well displayed in this piece.

"*Œdipus at Colonus*" is a contrast to "*King Œdipus*." The poor blind exiled king has become a sacred object by virtue of his sufferings, and his presence alone brings happiness to the country that receives him. Finally, he dies at peace with himself and the gods.

The distinguishing trait of the compositions of Sophocles is their unrivalled harmony. The elements of his dramas, as dialogue and song, the expression of familiar sentiments or of violent passion, are so artistically graduated, as to pass without shock from one extreme to the other, in a manner quite different from the rugged method of *Æschylus*. The latter may have been his rival in invention, and it is true that Shakspeare far excels him there. He does not, like Shakspeare, give a complete picture of life in its manifold phases, but takes a single idea, a typical character, and embodies in it all the essential elements of humanity.

His later dramas, especially, are written in a most elegant style; with concise and vigorous dialogue, and rich poetical sentiment. He is the *Phidias* of dramatic art. Sophocles was above all an Athenian poet, as compared with *Æschylus* and *Euripides*, who were Hellenic, and he represented the genius of his well-loved city in its most perfect form.

His teaching is the doctrine of Fate, as it was understood by the ancients, and of this he is the best exponent:—

"Fate is a dread power. If thou be wealthy, thou wilt not buy her off; if thou be valiant, thou canst not withstand her; if thou shut thyself within a tower, she will find thee out; if thou cross the sea in ships, she will overtake thee on the way. Whoso contendeth against Fate, fighteth against fearful odds. Thou canst not shake off what load Fate shall have put on thy shoulder."

SOPHOCLES

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE

B.C.

495 DATE OF BIRTH.

480 EXARCHOS AT CELEBRATION OF BATTLE OF SALAMIS AGE 15

468 FIRST DRAMATIC EXHIBITION AND PRIZE; 'TRIPTO-
LEMUS'. „ 27

440-39 ONE OF THE STRATEGI IN SAMIAN WAR; 'AN-
TIGONE' „ 55-56

413 ONE OF PROBOULOI AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF
SICILIAN ARMY „ 82

409 'PHILOCTETES' „ 86

406 DIED „ 89

401 'OEDIPUS COLONUS.'

EURIPIDES

480-406 B.C.

THIRD GREAT TRAGIC POET



EURIPIDES, the last of the three great tragic poets of Greece, was born in the second decade of the fifth century. He was fifteen years younger than Sophocles, and ten years younger than Socrates, though not of Athenian origin, his parents being refugees, living upon one of the Greek islands. His early education was not favourable for the development of his talents. He was first trained as an athlete, then he studied painting. Finally, however, he began to pursue rhetoric and philosophy, and it was these two which formed his character and developed his talent; and in after years, when he had become devoted to tragedy, it was the spirit of these rhetorical and philosophical studies of his youth which shone through his compositions in marked contrast to the religious and martial spirit which animated the drama of Æschylus. We find in his plays the same scheme of the world as in the writings of Anaxagoras, and the same foundation of morals as in the teachings of Socrates. He is often called the philosophic dramatist.

Notwithstanding the varied experience through which he had passed, he was but twenty-five years of age when he wrote his first tragedy. This

piece, now lost, was unfavourably received by the public; and, in common with several others which shared the same fate, was afterwards re-written and altered by him. Then followed "Hecuba," "Orestes," "Medea," "Hippolytus," "Alcestis," "Andromache," and "Iphigeneia." The number of his plays is variously estimated at from seventy-five to ninety-two. Of these, there are eighteen complete tragedies, one satiric drama, and fragments of others still extant.

The philosophical studies of Euripides turned him against Greek mythology, and he treated the subjects he took from it in such a manner as to rouse the prejudices of the aristocratic classes. He stripped the gods of their ideal greatness, and reduced them to the level of men—a method which pleased the populace greatly. In delineating woman and the workings of strong passion, Euripides displays special excellence, and has also filled his works with neat quotable sayings applicable to all the phases of human life.

After a literary career of nearly half a century, he retired to Macedonia, much to the regret of the Athenians. Here, two years later, tradition says, he met a tragic death, being torn in pieces by the king's hounds when alone in the woods.

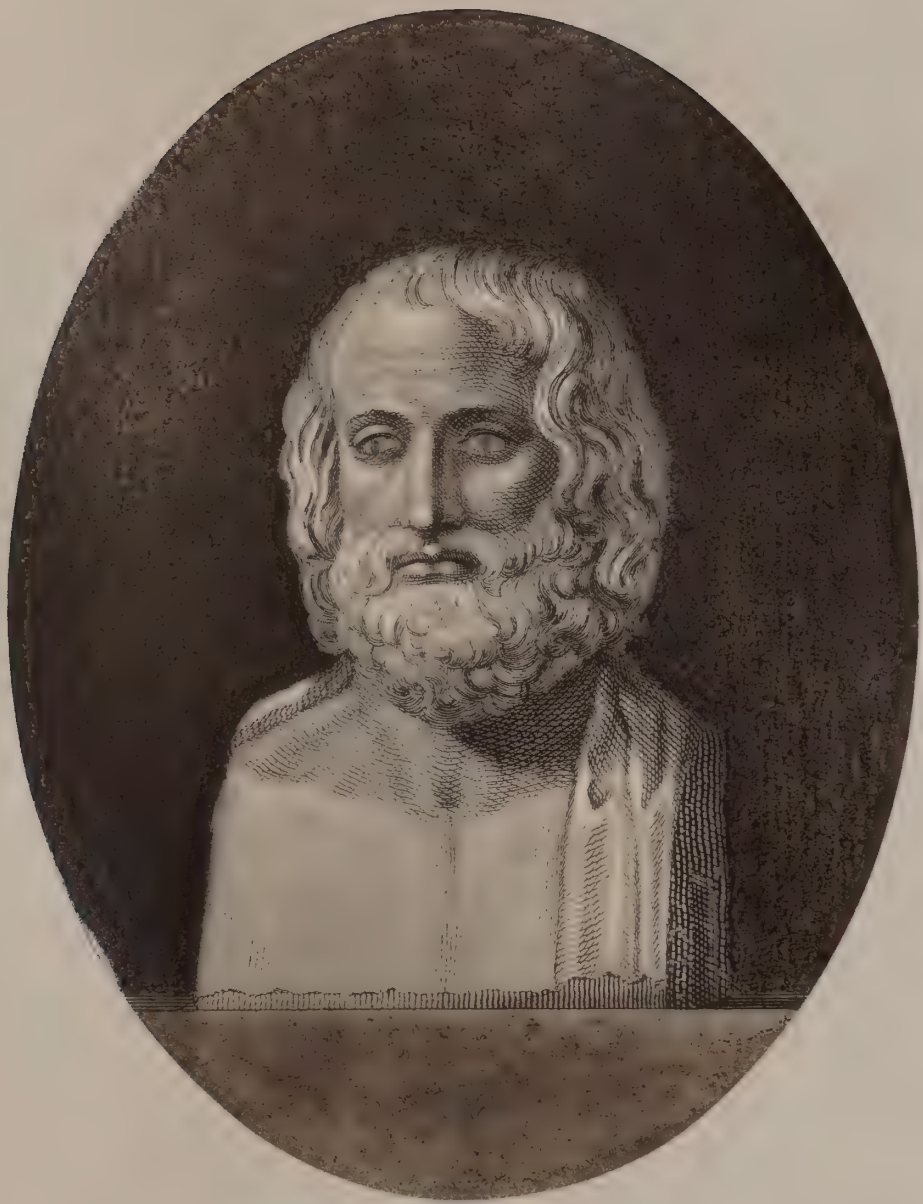
The names of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides are always mentioned together. Of this most famous dramatic triad it is customary to call Æschylus the most sublime, Sophocles the most beautiful and perfect, and Euripides the most pathetic and human. It is the latter who has been taken as the model by all later writers of classic drama, the Romans, the Italians, the French, and the Germans. His two best known plays, "Medea" and "Iphigeneia," have been imitated again and again: the "Iphigeneia" of Racine and that of Goethe are familiar to all.

Professor Jebb calls Euripides the mediator between ancient and modern drama.

"Euripides was only fifteen years younger than Sophocles; but when Euripides began to write, it must have been clear to any man of his genius and culture that, though an established prestige might be maintained, a new poet who sought to construct tragedy on the old basis would be building on sand. For, first, the popular religion itself—the very foundation of tragedy—had been undermined; secondly, scepticism had begun to be busy with the legends which that religion consecrated.



EURIPIDES



“ Euripides made a splendid effort to maintain the place of tragedy in the spiritual life of Athens, by modifying its interests in the sense which his own generation required. Could not the heroic personages still excite interest if they were made more real, if in them the passions and sorrows were portrayed with greater vividness and directness? and might not the least cultivated part of an audience enjoy thrilling plot, especially if written from the home legends of Athens?”

Thus Euripides marks in a striking manner the transition from the religious to the philosophic epoch; and it is in no wise the fault of the poet: it is the inevitable movement of art, which is forced to follow the march of the human mind. We may regard it as a progress rather than an alteration; or, at least, if there is a decadence on one side, there is then a progress on the other. Euripides had in effect discovered an unknown world, the world of the feelings; a new mine, the mine of the heart; and that discovery became the source of a most brilliant success.

One cannot deny to him the merit of being a grand painter of the human heart. It is by this that he stands, and by this that he must continue to please throughout all time—because he has traced the eternal sentiments of our being. His chief aim is to move; he knows the nature of human passions, and how to create the situations in which they are developed with the greatest force.

The following characteristic thoughts are from the writings of Euripides:—

“The tongue may swear and leave the heart unsworn.”

“There is nothing worse than a bad woman, and nothing better than a good one.”

“Politeness costeth not much, and may win for us a great deal.”

“We teach our children many things, but too often do we pass by the thing of most importance—good sense.”

“In all states there be three classes: one that is rich, and lazy, and selfish; one that is poor, and jealous, and reckless; and a middle one that is ingenious, and thoughtful, and trustworthy; for while this latter hath something to win, it hath very much to lose.”

“There be men that can prove black white, and, for a time, their cunning prospereth, but in the end it is found to be very foolishness, and the cunning man cometh to own with his neighbour, that honesty is the best policy.”

“Of everything there is satiety; so have I known men tired with beauty become enamoured of plain faces; and men used to luxury turn to peasant fare.”

E U R I P I D E S

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE



B.C.	DATE OF BIRTH.		
480	FIRST EXHIBITED; 'PELIADES'	AGE	25
441	FIRST GAINED THE PRIZE	"	39
438	'CRESSAE'; 'ALCMAEON'; 'TELEPHUS'; 'ALKESTIS'	"	42
431	'MEDEA'; 'PHILOCTETES'; 'DICTYS'; 'THERISTAE'	"	49
428	'HIPPOLYTUS'	"	52
423	'HECUBA'	"	57
421	'HERACLEIDAE'; 'SUPPLICES'	"	59
420-17	'ANDROMACHE'	"	60-63
415	'TROADES'; 'ALEXANDER'; 'PALAMEDES'; 'SISYPHUS'; 'ELECTRA'	"	65
412	'HELENA'; 'ANDROMEDA'	"	68
408	'ORESTES'	"	72
406	DATE OF DEATH	"	74

ARISTOPHANES

444-380 B.C.

GREATEST COMIC POET

FOUR of the Greek poets are representative men. Homer stands for epic poetry, Pindar for lyric poetry, and Æschylus for tragedy. We have now to add for comedy the name of Aristophanes.

Of the life of this poet we have no particulars. We know that he began to be famous at Athens, as a writer, about the fourth year of her great war with Sparta, 427 B.C.; we know from a caricature in Plato that he was a convivial fellow, fond of pleasure, drank much wine, and, like many other Athenians, spent whole nights in witty conversation; and from his works we know that he was the greatest comic writer that ever lived. Not more than a third of the total number of his plays have come down to us, but every one of them is a masterpiece. Chief of these are—

“The Clouds,” which ridicules Socrates and natural philosophy.

“The Knights,” an attack on Cleon.

“The Frogs,” a satire on Euripides, in which he is unfavourably contrasted with the elder dramatist, Æschylus.

“The Birds,” in which we have represented a fine philosophical

Eutopia; a model city, built by birds. It is called Cloud-Cuckoo-Town. In this play is found a curious cosmogony, and a highly interesting plan for laying out a city on scientific principles.

The "Acharnians," the "Peace," and the "Lysistrata," are three pleas for putting an end to the civil war.

In "The Wasps," the poet satirises the Athenian passion for lawsuits, and the popular mania for serving on the jury.

Finally, we have "The Female Parliament," a play representing an exciting conspiracy of the softer sex to effect a social revolution.

In these compositions the audacity of the writer knows no bounds. He lampoons Aspasia, Cleon, Socrates, Euripides, and the god Dionysus himself; burlesques woman's rights, the model societies of the philosophers, and the courts of justice; denounces the war policy, and attacks popular education. His whole work is a burlesque upon all existing men and things. "The old comedy was an audacious and scathing satire of public men, and "an attack on popular movements." The license which the poet takes with the manners and customs, with the citizens, and even with the gods of Athens themselves, is not only startling, but seems to us at first incredible.

Aristophanes ever remains as the chief source of study for historians, and all who wish to bring before their mind a true picture of the time, the age of Pericles.

In regard to his portrait, the face of the antique bust is characteristic; the features are those of broad humour, yet without being in any sense simple or undignified. As we contemplate the face, we are led irresistibly to the impression that it is just ready to burst into an uproarious laugh. It is exactly the face we should expect to see belonging to the prince of jokers.

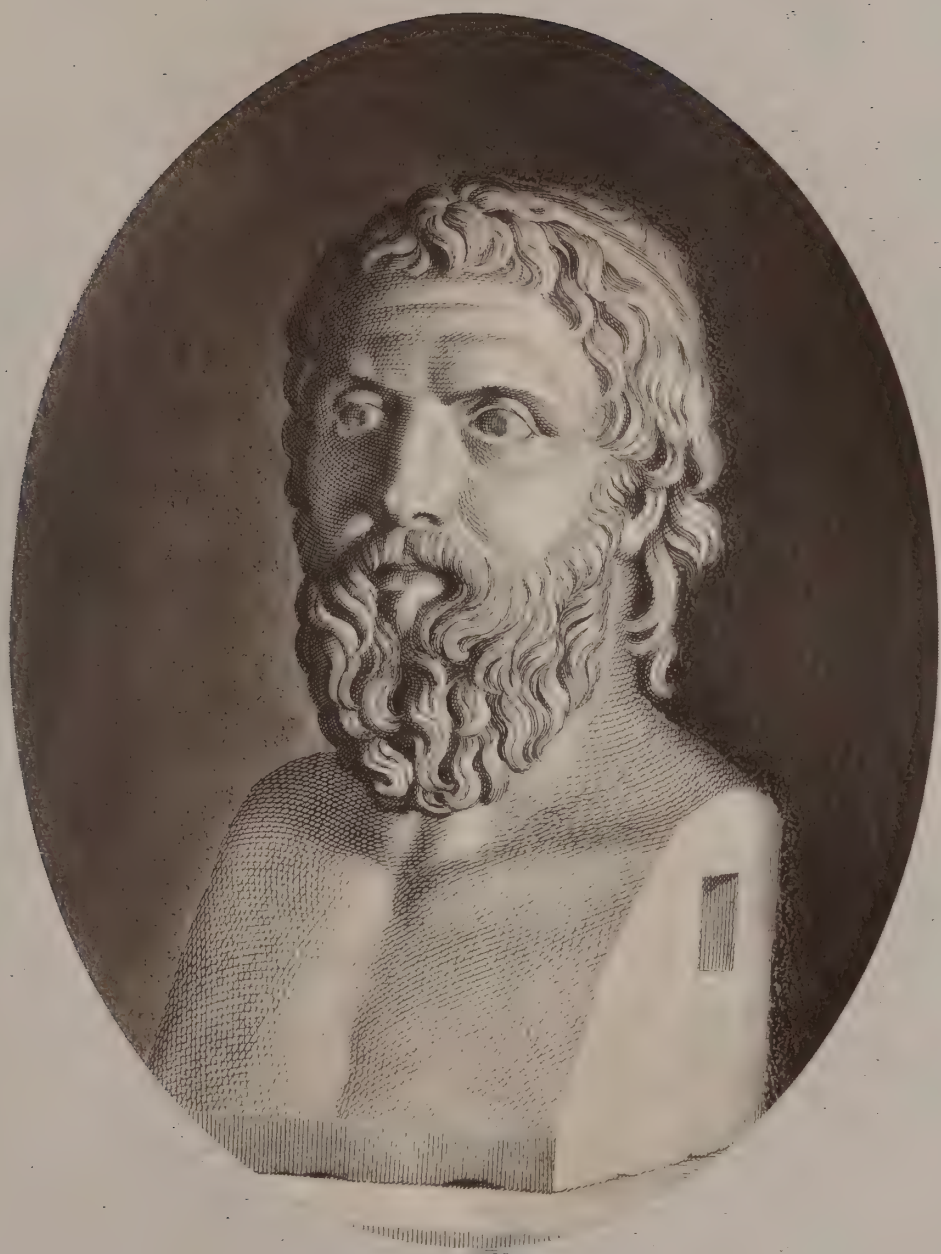
Concerning his character, several passages in the "Banquet" refer to him, and seem to throw a light upon the manner in which he was regarded at least by the philosophers. On taking his place at table, he is made to say—

"You speak well on this point, that we should by all means procure "for ourselves an easy method in our drinking, for I am one of those who "was thoroughly drenched yesterday."

A little further on, Socrates votes that each person in turn shall discourse on love. "Not a single man," he says, "will give a contrary



ARISTOPHANES



“ vote. Not Agathon, nor Pausanius; nor would, I ween, Aristophanes, whose occupation relates to Dionysus and Aphrodite.”

When it comes to Aristophanes' turn to discourse, it is found that either from repletion or from some other cause, a fit of the hiccups is upon him, and he is unable to speak; and he says to the doctor, who is reclining a little further down—

“ You are the proper person either to stop my hiccups, or to speak in my turn.”

The doctor promises to do both; tells the poet to hold his breath, and if this will not do, to gargle water; or if both these fail, he recommends him to tickle his nose till he sneezes.

“ You will not say one word,” replies Aristophanes, “ till I do so.”

It is hard to say whether the grotesque dissertation that shortly follows is mostly Aristophanes or mostly Plato; it seems a marriage of both, yet it is characteristic of the former: like his own creations, it is a piece of consummate art, and this is what we find in him throughout. Upon every page there is the unmistakable stamp of genius. He paints upon his canvas just what he wishes to paint, and does it so well that we assent to it and call it Nature. Even when the great and good Socrates is brought before us, held up in a basket, “ walking in the air and speculating about the sun,” we are forced to join in the laugh, and, worse, to applaud the wrong.

“ The philosopher who wore no under-garments,” says Mr. Cotton, “ and the same upper robes in both summer and winter; who generally went barefoot, and appears to have possessed one pair of shoes which lasted him a lifetime; who used to stand for hours in a public place in a fit of abstraction; to say nothing of his snub-nose and extraordinary face and figure; could hardly expect to escape the license of the old comedy.”

It is reported that Plato, “ the beloved disciple,” sent to the tyrant of Syracuse a copy of “ The Clouds ” of Aristophanes, as the best expression of the state of things at Athens.

ARISTOPHANES

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE

[illegible]

MENANDER

342-291 B.C.

PRECURSOR OF MODERN COMEDY

SECOND GREAT COMIC POET

EACH of the two great centuries of Athens, the century of Pericles and the century of Alexander, had its picture of society : that of the former was called the old comedy, and its representative was Aristophanes ; that of the latter, the new comedy, and its representative was Menander. We can form a sort of general though imperfect idea of the difference between the two, if we liken the old comedy to our modern burlesque, and the new comedy to our modern dramas, such as the "School for Scandal," and "The Rivals." The new comedy was the beginning of what are sometimes called society plays.

Menander was born at Athens, 342 B.C. His uncle, Alexis, was a dramatist of considerable repute in comedy, and apparently taught him the principles of his art at an early age. The philosopher and moralist, Theophrastus, who excelled in delineation of character, was his master ; but another philosopher, who exercised great influence over his early studies, was his friend and school-fellow, Epicurus. Though not a disciple of Epicurus, he imbibed the same philosophic principles, from the elegant and indolent society in which they lived, believing the chief end of life

to be intellectual enjoyment, founded on material well-being. During the ten years that Athens was governed by the magistrate, Demetrius, 317 to 307 B.C., the comedies of Menander, with their polished tone and lively mocking sentiments, were admirably suited to the tastes of Athenian society; but the fall of Demetrius provoked a reaction, and subjected Menander to violent persecution. He might have sought a refuge with Demetrius, at the court of the Ptolomies in Egypt, and was flatteringly urged to do so, but he preferred to remain at Athens, fighting his way, multiplying his masterpieces—the number of plays attributed to him is about one hundred—and disputing the laurel crown with rivals but too often declared superior to him by the bad taste and injustice of his fellow-citizens. He was drowned while bathing at the port of Piræus, when fifty-two years of age.

In spite of his talents, Menander did not obtain from his contemporaries the position he merited. Of the hundred times that he competed for the prize, he was but eight times crowned.

Beaten when living by his unworthy rivals, who owed their success to intrigue rather than merit, posterity has avenged his memory, and given him the first rank in the new comedy, a position as incontestible as that of Homer in epos, and Demosthenes in eloquence. Grammarians, in fact, give him the second place among poets, after Homer; Plutarch highly praises him; all the Roman comic poets, Plautus, Cecilius, Terence, and Afranius, acknowledged him their standard; his plays were popular in the best society of Greece and Rome, five centuries after his death, and even later, for it was not until the Byzantine priests obtained permission from the emperors to burn his works with those of Philemon and Sappho, that the plays of Menander disappeared for ever from the world. The fathers appear to have had less fear of the rude license of Aristophanes, whose works remained untouched, than for the soft refinement and seductive verse of Menander.

It is from a study of his Roman imitators, that our knowledge of their master's dramatic skill has been gleaned. Among them, Terence borrowed four pieces out of six from Menander's works, not unfrequently repeating whole pages of text unaltered, a plagiary that led Julius Cæsar to call him a "half Menander."

Comedy may be said to have three elements—action, character, and manners. Aristophanes makes the action merely the poetical development



MENANDER



of an idea; other dramatists make it a bond of union between short episodes, which are pictures of contemporary manners. The new comedy made the action an intrigue, a series of incidents born of some fact in domestic life, gradually complicated and finally resolved. This intrigue, though simple, and becoming by frequent repetitions somewhat monotonous—for life among the ancients was less complex than among the moderns—served to bring the characters into play.

Menander was said to excel in the invention and arrangement of these intrigues; but it is probable that in this his rivals were his superiors, what the drama owes to him is its creation of characters. The good taste of the refined age in which Menander lived would not tolerate the gross sensualities of the previous century, and the young poets of the new comedy were obliged to paint vice and ridicule in general terms, instead of putting actual persons upon the stage. This gradually led to the formation of types; types moreover which, in a very short time, grew to be conventional: young lovers, light and dark; fathers, stern and complacent; mothers, kind and unkind; slaves, faithful and otherwise; and of maidens, a large assortment. Thus Menander put Athenian society upon the stage, but he gave it the common passions of the human race, the follies and vices which belong to all time; the father, the lover, the maiden, the wily slave, and the courtesan, are his most ordinary figures; but he has drawn men of all professions, and also all those morbid characters which make masterpieces—"the jealous," "the superstitious," misers, gluttons, misanthropes. The "Book of Characters," by Theophrastus, contains the sketches which Menander made portraits, giving them colour and life.

As before mentioned, along with this creation of characters there grew up what we call the intrigue or plot, a tangled web to be unravelled at the end. In this happy invention Menander joins hands with Euripides as one of the chief makers of dramatic art.

The antique statue of Menander in the Vatican, from which our portrait is taken, has preserved his features. The critics, Schlegel and Guizot, find in this marble a faithful image of his genius. "The head is slightly inclined and turned a little to the left, neither the wrinkles of age nor the anguish of pain have contracted the features; but habits of reflection have imprinted on the broad high forehead their austere signs,

while at the same time the mouth with slightly projecting lips gently pressed together by a suppressed smile, seems ready to transform into sharp epigrams the thoughts flitting through the mind. All the features breathe the easy confidence born of intimate self-knowledge and long experience of men, the grace of natural gaiety, and an indulgent spirit of mockery."

Menander often dwelt on the miseries of old age, and has epitomised his sentiments on this subject in the well-known saying, "Whom the gods love die young."

LUCRETIOUS

95-55 B.C.

MOST PROFOUND OF THE LATIN AUTHORS

GREATEST DIDACTIC POET

T. CARUS LUCRETIOUS and Julius Cæsar were the only men of letters ever produced by Rome. Martha, in his monograph upon Lucretius, notes this fact, and adds, that the poet may have owed to the accident of his birth, and to the natural training received in the capital of the world, that singular freedom of thought rarely to be found outside a great metropolis. Voltaire was born a Parisian.

Lucretius was of high birth, coming of the renowned family which had given to the world a grand type of heroism, the virtuous Lucretia. Thus by his position he might have been a soldier and a statesman; but political honours were not in accordance with his desires; he was a student, a poet, a philosopher. His destiny was to live a "hidden life," and to write a book—to live a life unknown, and to write a book that should be immortal.

Like other patrician youths of his century, Cicero and Cæsar, he must have learned all that was best in Greece. His favourite authors were Homer, Empedocles, Thucydides, and Epicurus, thus he was familiar with the first of her poets and the last of her philosophers; and his book, *De Rerum Natura*, on "The Origin of Things," was nothing else than a grand poetical synthesis of this last Greek philosophy.

In reading his work, we perceive the author's intense hatred of

the superstition of paganism; his enthusiastic love of nature; his contempt for the snares of human passion, love, ambition, &c. Some find in it, too, a weariness of the world, *ennui*, that spiritual malady ever found where civilisation has reached a high state. As a remedy for all ills, he proclaims the knowledge of the order of the universe—a philosophy of which the principles are certain, the philosophy of nature.

Concerning the ground principle of this system, the world's judgment of eighteen hundred years seems in our own century in danger of being reversed. What was formerly called the logic of chance, now seems quite readily to lend itself to the formula of "the reign of law."

"The subject of the poem is, the Discovered Majesty or Order of the Universe. The cardinal truth that Lucretius proclaimed was, that creation was no result of chance, or of capricious exercise of power, but arose out of certain regular and orderly processes, dependant on certain primal conditions of which no further account can be given."

So it is at last settled that there is nothing new under the sun. At the outset of his work, Lucretius propounds his *atomic theory*—

"Primordial atoms of pure solidity, which composed of the smallest points cohere, not combined of a union of any other things, but rather endowed with an eternal simple and indissoluble existence, from which Nature allows nothing to be broken off or even diminished, reserving these primordial atoms as seeds for her productions."

Atoms are endued with weight and motion. "Some atoms," he says, "combine closely together and form dense bodies, others combine loosely and form thinner substance."

Here is his *law of evolution*—

"The infinite number of atoms moving through the infinite space composed infinite worlds, which are sometimes increased by others being added, and sometimes diminished and dissolved by the separation and departure of atoms."

Further on, we find his *spontaneous generation*—

"In the early age of the world, the earth spread over the hills the growth of herbs and the beauty of verdure. . . . For as feathers and hairs and bristles are first produced over the limbs of quadrupeds, and the bodies of the winged tribes, so the new earth first put forth herbs and trees, and afterwards generated the numerous races of animals."



LUCRETIVS



Finally, he treats of the rudeness of the early life of man, the commencement of culture, the invention of the discovery of fire, and the growth of society. Previous to this he has given us his psychology—

“Imagination and thought are produced by means of images of things which penetrate the body through the senses.”

The poet and philosopher had for a friend a popular politician of his day, and to him his book is dedicated. “The book has thus the form of a personal address to a friend. The repeated personal appeals give vivacity to the poem, and enable the reader to feel that he is not so much following a written argument, as listening to the eloquent voice of a living man earnest to express conviction.”

Of the many recent critics and translators of Lucretius, no one has pronounced upon him so high a eulogium as Professor Sellar. From his work we take the following extracts:—

“Although his nature was of the fine Roman fibre; although deeply imbued with the philosophy of Greece, and, like all great thinkers, not free from the influence of his time; he was one of the most conspicuously original men which Rome produced: the man who, in thought and feeling, was most clearly above the range of his age and country.”

“It is, however, in his devotion to truth, perhaps more than in any other quality, that Lucretius rises clearly above the level both of his countrymen and of his age. He thus seems to combine in himself what was greatest in the Greek and in the Roman mind,—the Greek ardour of enquiry, the Roman manliness of heart. He is a Roman poet of the time of Julius Cæsar, united with the spirit of one of the early Greek philosophers. He unites the speculative passion of the dawn of ancient enquiry with the rare observation of its meridian. The spirit and purpose with which Lucretius expounds the philosophy of nature, was to raise human life out of the ignorance and consequent misery of superstition. It is the constant presence of this practical purpose that imparts to his words that peculiar tone of impassioned earnestness of which there is no parallel in ancient literature.”

“The passion of his whole intellectual and moral being was concentrated on the greatest subject of contemplation for the greatest practical object—the reformation of the world.”

VIRGIL

70-19 B.C.

NATIONAL POET OF THE ROMANS

GREATEST PASTORAL POET

VIRGIL was a man of rural life and of retirement. A magistrate's messenger possessed of a small farm near Mantua, let it out to an honest farmer, named Maro, and was so well pleased with his prudent and industrious tenant, that he gave him his daughter in marriage. Upon this humble farm, and of these parents, was born the boy destined to be the prince of Latin poets. His career offers a striking example of the force of early impressions. We see the image of the ruddy child running about on his father's farm; he is familiar enough with clouds and mountains, rivers and trees, and domestic animals, and with a simple and virtuous life: it is this scenery and this life that lay the foundation for the work of the future poet. His most perfect work is a return to these scenes of his childhood.

He had a good training in Milan and Naples; learned Greek rhetoric, and Roman law, and formed a philosophy for himself—Stoic, Epicurean and Platonic combined, eclectic—much like the belief of Cicero, Horace, and others of his century. His favourite masters were an Epicurean philosopher and a grammarian of the Alexandrian school.

At twenty-five, Virgil wrote short poems, of which nothing remains but the titles. At thirty appeared his first work of value, the "Bucolics." It appeared after the battle of Philippi, when half Italy had been partitioned out as spoil to the victorious soldiery, Virgil's own little patrimony sharing the fate of all the rest. Through the influence of Maecenas, his farm had been restored to him. The first "Bucolic" is at once a thank-offering to his sovereign, and a plaintive description of the situation and sufferings of the exiles—

"Shall a ruffian soldier possess the cultivated fields?
No carol shall I sing, no more my goats, as I feed you, shall you browse
The flowery cythus and bitter willows."

Throughout all the works of Virgil there runs a tinge of melancholy, which critics maintain is traceable to the influence of this important and disastrous event.

The "Bucolics" are a collection of idyls, imitating Theocritus. In the Augustan age, it was the custom with men of letters each to imitate a Greek model. Terence translates Menander; Lucretius emulates Empedocles; Phædrus repeats Æsop; Cicero is a would-be Plato; and Virgil begins as a Latin Theocritus, ending as a Latin Hesiod and a Latin Homer.

The "Bucolics," Virgil's youthful work, is an example of pastoral poetry, treating of the loves of impossible shepherds and shepherdesses. The "Georgics," his mature work, is an example of rural poetry, and presents to us true pictures of "country living and country thinking," in the capital of the world, thirty years before the Christian era. They are the poems of peace, they are suggested by Maecenas, prime minister; it is intended that they shall mirror the calm and prosperous life of good Roman citizens, under the benign rule of the sovereign Augustus. The unsophisticated country poet, sober and pious, fills a place in the policy of that sovereign—Virgil becomes so to speak the official poet of the empire. Already he had sung the return of the golden age o'er all the world to arise when—

"The goats of themselves, shall homeward convey their udders distended with milk, nor shall the herd dread huge overgrown lions."

It now becomes his congenial task to interest the people in those peaceful pursuits in which the Emperor desires them to be interested. The



VIRGIL



poet sings what he knows of farming. How to plow the soil, and what to plant in it; of the rearing of cattle, of the keeping of bees—

“Next I will set forth the heavenly gift, aerial honey. . . . First a seat and station must be sought for the bees, where neither winds may have access, . . . nor sheep and frisky kids may trample down the flowers.”

The keeping of bees was an important item in Roman husbandry.

The “*Georgics*” was finished at the point when Cæsar took the title of Imperator; the temple of Janus was closed, Rome was at her meridian. Then came to Virgil the idea to give his country a grand epic poem. To write a hymn to the glory of Rome, this was the end proposed. To imitate Homer and praise Augustus, these were the means. The result was a triumphant success; the work was fitted to the time and place.

In the eighth book of the *Æneid*, the poet makes the goddess present his legendary hero with a suit of armour. On the shield is represented the future glory of the Romans, a representation which is in actual fact a description of the greatest parade ever witnessed, a Roman triumph—

“Cæsar again having in triple triumph entered the walls of Rome, was consecrating through all the city, three hundred stately temples, his immortal vow to the Italian gods. The streets rung with joy, and games, and acclamations; in all the temples are choirs of matrons, and in all the temples altars. Before the altars, the sacrificed bullocks cover the ground. Augustus himself, seated in the snow-white porch of shining Phœbus, reviews the offerings of the people, and fits them to the stately pillars. In long orderly processions the vanquished nations march, as various in their garb and arms as in their language. . . . Such scenes the hero views with wonder, rejoices in their representation, and on his shoulders bears aloft the fame and fortunes of his descendants.”

Virgil was tall, and probably slender, of delicate health, yet with a ruddy complexion, the fruit of his early life. Of a retiring disposition, he was in no sense a man of the world, seeking friendship rather than society, having the air and manners of a person country-bred, inclined to melancholy, with a natural terror of dissension and conflict—in all his works, war is held up as synonymous with misery.

In his life he is discreet; there is in his character something serious, a principle of elevation, noble and tender, of which we must never lose sight.

The qualities of the genius of Virgil have been thus summed up by S^{te}. Beuve: “Warm love of nature, love of poetry; respect for the great
“ poets, and judicious imitation of their beauties, the erudition and science
“ of the antiquary; patriotism, the pride of being a Roman citizen, humanity,
“ piety, sensibility, and tenderness. But, above all, his principal charac-
“ teristic and perfection is that sovereign quality which embraces in it, and
“ unites all the others—a quality which appears also in the genius of
“ Raphael—unity of tone and colour, harmony, fitness of parts, proportion,
“ and sustained good taste.”



VIRGIL

FROM THE ANTIQUE BUST



VIRGIL

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE

—o:0:0o—									
B.C.									
70	DATE OF BIRTH.								
55	ASSUMED THE <i>TOGA VIRILIS</i>	.	.	.	.	.	AGE	15	
42	EJECTED FROM FARM BY SOLDIERS OF								
	OCTAVIUS	.	.	.	.	.	„	28	
41-37	‘BUCOLICA’	.	.	.	.	.	„	29-33	
40	RESTORED TO HIS ESTATES	.	.	.	.	.	„	30	
37-31	‘GEORGICA’	.	.	.	.	.	„	33-39	
27-20	‘ÆNEID’	.	.	.	.	.	„	43-50	
20	AT ATHENS	.	.	.	.	.	„	50	
19	DIED	.	.	.	.	.	„	51	





DANTE
YOUNG

DANTE

A.D. 1265-1321

POET OF THE MIDDLE AGES

THE idea of a living man entering the kingdom of the dead to record his feelings and experiences, or describe its awful mysteries to his fellow-men on his return to earth, is a tradition to be found, in more or less definite shape, scattered through the legends of the human race. Homer and Virgil have embodied the fantasy in their poems. It was the subject of scenic representations during the Middle Ages, while the paintings and sculpture of cloister and cathedral familiarised the faithful with the superstition. But it remained for the genius of Dante to collect the scattered details in existence before his time; and, by the light of his wide experience, his profound intelligence, his sufferings, passions, and prejudices, and the stirring incidents of his own period, to fuse them into a marvellous history of Christian faith, as it was understood and interpreted by the Catholic Church, before its glowing colours had been toned down by the Reformation.

Dante Alighieri was born at Florence, in 1265, of an ancient family that lost one of its ancestors at the Crusades. There is much uncertainty as to the nature or extent of his early education; and it is a matter of

conjecture whether he owed the vast erudition he has displayed in every branch of human knowledge to careful training in youth, or to his own extensive researches and patient studies in mature years. While still young, he conceived a Platonic passion for Beatrice Portinari—a passion destined to have a lasting influence upon his heart and genius. She became his ideal of beauty and perfection, to be translated into sonnets, songs, and ballads, a collection of which he published at twenty-six, under the title of “The New Life.”

Dante took an active part in the political strifes of his native city; and in 1302, while on a mission to the Pope at Rome, was banished from Florence, his property confiscated, and he was even condemned to be burnt alive if he returned.

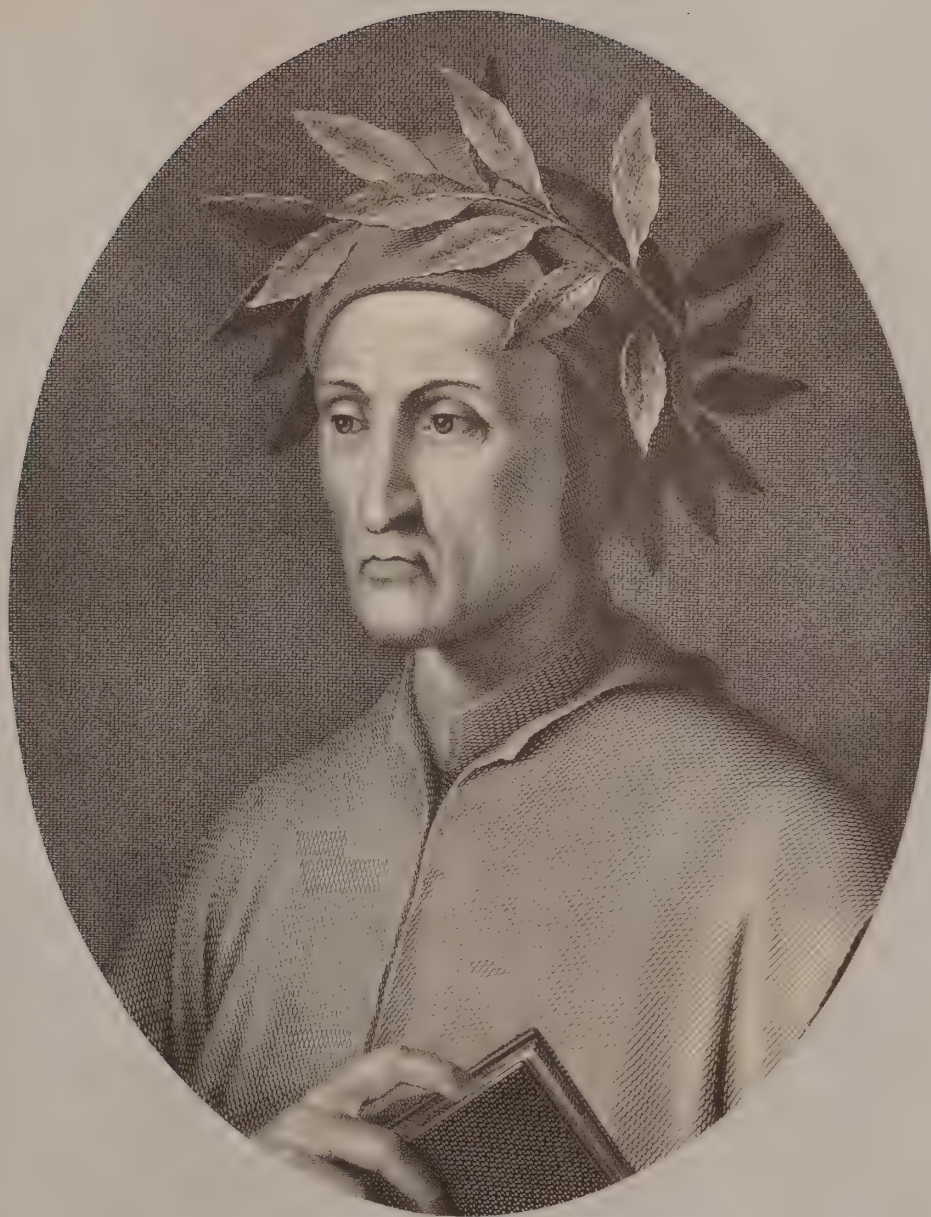
From this moment began for Dante “the slow, bitter, lingering death”—the Hell of Exile—which none can know but the exile himself.” He sought a refuge at Verona, then at Bologna, Padua, and finally at Ravenna. His wanderings, some authorities say, carried him even to Paris, and there for a time he studied theology. After many fruitless attempts he obtained permission, in 1315, to return to Florence; but it was coupled with such humiliating conditions that he refused to submit to them. In 1321 he died at Ravenna, where he had spent the few tranquil years of his unhappy wanderings.

Beatrice, whom Dante, it is said, scarcely knew personally, married young, and died at twenty-five. Some years after, Dante married Gemma Donati, who bore him six children; but the marriage was not a happy one. Boccaccio describes Dante as a figure of middle height, with noble and well-marked features, face long, nose aquiline, eyes large, under lip projecting, complexion dark, hair and beard black, thick, and wavy. The expression of the eyes and mouth especially indicating profound and melancholy feeling. In all his relations he was modest and reserved, speaking rarely but with eloquent force. He was fond of female society, in which he showed much politeness and gaiety. Though simple in his manner of living, he bestowed considerable attention on his dress and general appearance.

After Dante's death a mask was taken, in plaster, of the face, from which terra cotta busts were made, and his best portrait obtained. Here Dante appears with a long and pointed nose, slightly curved; the eyes are



DANTE



deeply sunk beneath strong evenly-arched eyebrows, with a deep wrinkle between them; the mouth has a spiritual and ironic expression, under lip slightly projecting, with chin and cheek-bones somewhat prominent. The whole head expresses intellect and vigour, strong will, and habits of meditation. Raphael painted Dante, after the mask likeness, in two of his principal works, and a large number of paintings, statues, and medals, have repeated and familiarised his face until it has become one of the most authentic and best known portraits in existence.

To an Italian, the life of Dante is summed up in one line,—he loved Beatrice and wrote “The Divine Comedy.” This master-piece was the foundation of modern Italian. It was written by Dante in exile, circulated in fragmentary manuscripts during his life, and not published until after his death, either because he wished to perfect it by repeated emendations, or because he feared the vengeance of his enemies, who are attacked in it in a bitter and sarcastical spirit. Its three distinct poems, “The Inferno,” “The Purgatory,” and “The Paradise,” describe punishment without end or hope, expiatory sufferings, and eternal felicity. Certain writers of our century find in them traces of a high moral purpose. “Dante was ‘a sincere patriot,’ they say, and ‘frightened at the symptoms of decay visible in Christian society, he wished to save his compatriots, and ‘wrote the ‘Divine Comedy’ to indicate the way of salvation.”

The imposing structure of this triple poem, the prodigious variety of scenes it describes, and the local colour he has given them; the energy of some, the grace of others; their wonderful simplicity, their original and primitive type; give to the poem a place in literature, which neither its defects, nor the change of tastes that time has brought, can take away. It is a complete personification of the intense religious spirit of the Middle Ages, and fully justifies the title posterity has bestowed upon its author, of the “Christian Homer.”

DANTE

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE



1265	BORN AT FLORENCE.		
1281	STUDIED AT BOLOGNA AND PADUA	AGE	16
1289	AT VICTORY OF GUELFs AT CAMPALDINO . .	„	24
1290	SERVED IN EXPEDITION AGAINST PISA . . .	„	25
1294	‘VITA NUOVA’	„	29
1300	‘DIVINA COMMEDIA’ COMMENCED; APPOINTED CHIEF OF THE PRIORI OF FLORENCE . .	„	35
1301	EMBASSADOR TO ROME ON BEHALF OF THE BIANCHI	„	36
1302	FINED AND BANISHED	„	37
1304	JOINED IN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON FLORENCE	„	39
1306	VISITED PADUA	„	41
1308	LIVED CHIEFLY AT VERONA; VISITED PARIS .	„	43
1313	TOOK REFUGE AT VERONA	„	48
1319	WENT TO RAVENNA	„	54
1321	DIED AT RAVENNA	„	56

RABELAIS

1495-1553

SATIRIST OF THE RENAISSANCE

RABELAIS was the youngest son of an innkeeper, in a small French town. At ten years of age he was put to school at an abbey, afterwards at a convent, and later, in accordance with his father's desire, he joined one of the Mendicant orders, and spent fifteen years in a monastery.

As a consequence of all this, two sentiments became deeply rooted in his mind, a love of letters, and a hatred of monks; his strong passion for literature, both ancient and modern, subjected him to violent persecution from his brother monks. He was suspected of eating forbidden fruit, his cell was searched, and they found profane works—Greek. His books were confiscated, and he was placed in confinement.

Other biographers assert that his imprisonment was due to the irreverent practical jokes he played on his companions.

In company with another monk, a fellow-prisoner for the same offence, he managed to escape. Some time later, he secured high influence, and, by the authorisation of Pope Clement VII., turned Benedictine, and entered the abbey of Maillezais. But his caustic humour and love of liberty rendered life in a convent intolerable, and he shortly renounced it altogether, and became a citizen of the world—not to say a vagabond.

In his wanderings he visited Rochelle, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Montpellier, Avignon, and Bourges, showing always a preference for university towns. At Lyons, 1532-1534, he practised as a physician, and lectured

on anatomy, studied archæology, jurisprudence, and other sciences; edited works on a variety of subjects for the publishers of Lyons, and even got out a series of almanacks.

All this scientific labour brought him less reputation than a grotesque romance, founded on a popular tradition of the time called, "The Inestimable Life of the Great Gargantua, the Father of Pantagruel," a work, he says, he wrote when eating and drinking, to amuse his patients; and more copies of which were sold in two months, than of Bibles in nine years.

In 1534, a six months' residence in Rome served to supply fresh material for his satirical pen, but he was sufficiently prudent to obtain from the pope, Paul III., absolution for past irregularities, and authority to practise medicine, and hold a benefice in the church.

His book obtained royal approbation; the Sorbonne vainly opposed it. It would seem to have been the destiny of Rabelais to be persecuted by monks and theologians, and protected by popes and princes.

In 1547, the death of Francis I. exposed Rabelais to persecution, and he visited Rome for the third time. Later, he obtained permission from Henry II. to publish his works in Greek, Latin, and Italian, and in 1551 he was installed curé of Meudon, an office he seems to have filled with honour to himself, and to the satisfaction of his parishioners. He is said to have died here.

Rabelais assumed the mask of a buffoon, in order to attack with impunity the errors and follies of his time and his personal enemies. Much was pardoned in his writings for the sound, practical wisdom they contained.

Extravagant praises have been freely bestowed upon him. He resembles Aristophanes in his fecundity, liveliness, and licence, Shakspeare in comic vein, has all the learning of Erasmus, the philosophical culture of Ficinus, the imagination of Ariosto, and the natural grace of Boccaccio.

Yet he is incomprehensible—his book an enigma. He is a chimera, with the face of a beautiful woman, the feet of a dragon—a monstrous compound of fine morality and gross corruption. Where he is good, he is exquisite; where he is bad, he is past all endurance: in short, he is the Renaissance.

Burton, Swift, Sterne, and Southey, have all drawn inspiration from Rabelais.



RABELAIS



RABELAIS

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE



1483	BORN AT CHINON.		
1532	'GARGANTUA'	AGE	49
1536	WENT WITH CARDINAL DU BELLAY TO ROME .	„	53
1537	M.D. AT MONTPELLIER	„	54
1545	CURÉ OF MENDON	„	62
1546	'PANTAGRUEL'	„	63
1556	DIED AT PARIS	„	73

CERVANTES

1547-1616

AUTHOR OF "DON QUIXOTE"

THE GREATEST OF ROMANCES

THE celebrated Spanish poet and novelist was born at Alcala de Henarjes, Old Castile, in 1547, of a noble but poor family; and, after studying at the university of his native town, then of some reputation, he spent two years at Salamanca, living probably on the alms bestowed on the poor medical and law students of his time. Cervantes' life is a long and painful romance of ill-requited services, slavery, imprisonment, and lost illusions.

In 1568 he went to Italy as page in the service of a cardinal, a position little to his taste. The following year he changed it for that of a common soldier, and was severely wounded in the breast and left hand at the battle of Lepanto; his hand was amputated. Returning to Spain in 1575, the vessel was captured by Algerian pirates, and he and his brother condemned to slavery. After three ineffectual attempts to get free, in one of which he narrowly escaped death, he was ransomed for five hundred crowns, and set at liberty in company with his companions in servitude.

Born poor, with a taste for poetry, the trade of soldier and six years of slavery had not much improved his worldly prospects. In 1584 he married a lady as noble and as poor as himself, and resolving to live by his

pen, he wrote comedies; not less than thirty were produced, but few of them exist. As Cervantes himself admits, he could not compete as dramatist with Lope de Vega, who was at this time the favourite of the Spanish stage. He published a number of romances and poems, none of which brought him fame or money.

From 1588 to 1592 he was an agent for naval stores at Seville; and, later, was imprisoned twice on the charge of misappropriating revenue funds—a charge of which he was afterwards acquitted. It was while in prison that, like John Bunyan, he wrote his one immortal work—"Don Quixote." The first part was published in 1605. At first it met with little success, but an anonymous pamphlet, entitled "Busca Pie," said to have been written by Cervantes himself, declaring the work to be an attack on high persons of the court, had the intended effect of awakening public curiosity, and four editions were published the first year.

Notwithstanding this sudden popularity, the author appears to have remained in poverty. Eight years afterwards, 1614, a spurious second part to "Don Quixote," was brought out by one of his enemies; it was a wretched rhapsody of revolting grossness, devoid of interest and monstrous in style, accusing Cervantes, "a miserable old cripple," of being a blusterer and scandal-monger. Cervantes replied to this :

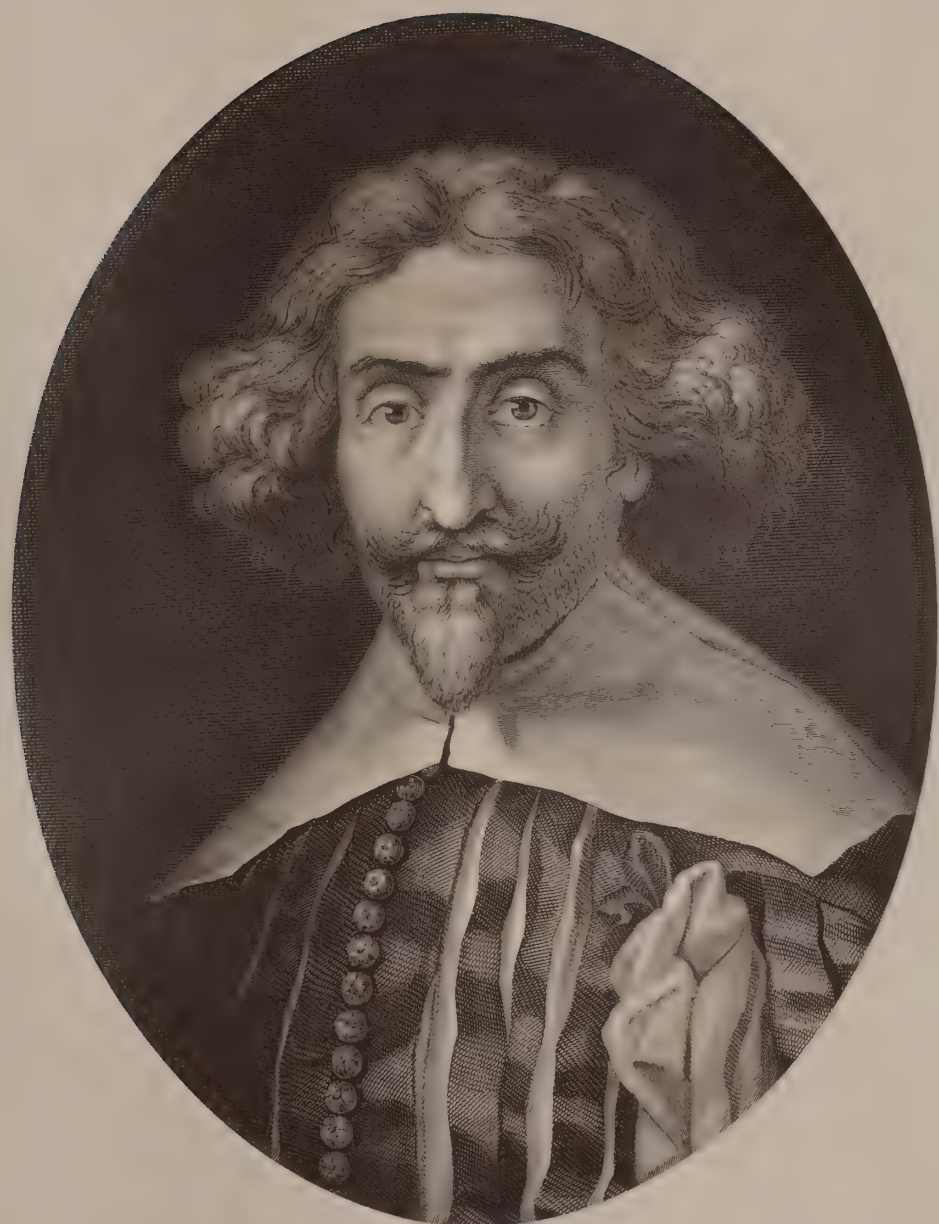
"I am not responsible for my grey hairs, and as for my crippled arm, that I got on the field of battle, not in a tavern brawl."

In 1615, Cervantes demanded permission to publish a true second part to his "Don Quixote." The Censors of the Inquisition raised objections and tried to pick a quarrel with him on account of a phrase of Sancho Panza's, relating to works of charity, but the permission was eventually given. The Author, however, still remained poor. At the end of all his resources, disabused of all his illusions, he entered the Congregation of the Third Order of St. Francis, and died shortly after.

"Don Quixote" has been translated into every language; it has no rival, nor had it a model; it was the first of its kind, a strictly original work. Manners have changed, the ridicule of the Author's time has grown old and given place to the absurdities of a later date, still the Hero of la Mancha excites the interest of readers in every country, of every class, of every age. Who does not feel an interest in this fantastic hero, a grave, profound, generous, exalted ideal, yet never overstepping the bounds of nature,—and



CERVANTES



his broadly-contrasted Squire Sancho, with his coarse naïveté, animal nature, and positive dogmatism? The work is thoroughly good, the characters are new and well sustained, the observations just as well as ingenious, the witticisms natural, and the descriptions painted with the highest skill. Of its faults, it may be said they are the faults of humanity not of the Author.

Poor Cervantes, who had so little honour from his countrymen when living, became the glory of Spanish literature when dead. Parish, convent and public archives have been dug into to find the exact place of his birth and the least particulars relating to his life, while a magnificent edition of "Don Quixote" under royal auspices, on superb paper, with new type and rich engravings, has been published to make amends for the blind injustice that let him die in poverty and obscurity.

CERVANTES

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE

1547	BORN AT ALCALA DE HENARES, NEW CASTILE.									
1569	PAGE TO CARDINAL GIULIO ACQUAVIVA.	.	.			AGE				22
1571	WOUNDED AT BATTLE OF LEPANTO .	.	.	.		"				24
1575	CARRIED TO ALGIERS BY PIRATES .	.	.	.	.	"				28
1580	RELEASED . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				33
1584	'GALATEA' PUBLISHED . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				37
1585	SETTLED AT MADRID . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				38
1588	REMOVED TO SEVILLE . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				41
1605	FIRST PART OF 'DON QUIXOTE' . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				58
1613	'NOVELAS EXEMPLARES' . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				66
1614	'VIAGE AL PARNASO' . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				67
1615	SECOND PART OF 'DON QUIXOTE' . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				68
1616	DIED AT MADRID . . . . .	.	.	.	.	"				69



SHAKSPEARE

FROM THE FOLIO EDITION



SHAKSPEARE

1564-1616

THE PRINCE OF POETS

OF the greatest of poets, the briefest biography. John Shakspeare, retired shopkeeper, bailiff and alderman of Stratford, was the father of five children:—William, Gilbert, John, Anne, and Richard. The mother, Mary Shakspeare, was granddaughter of a valet-de-chambre to Henry VII. This was the Shakspeare family. The children were sent to the town school, where they learned something of Latin and a little Greek. It is of the eldest boy alone, however, that we have anything further to record.

At seventeen, William married a lady eight years his senior. Shortly after was born his first child, Susannah; and one year later, twins. These were his last children. The young husband suddenly quitted Stratford, came to London, and joined a troupe of actors. In this venture he was not unsuccessful, for it is known that he very soon held a share in the Blackfriars theatre.

At this point his real history begins. Let us sum up, according to the most probable conjecture, the life of "the greatest man the world e'er saw," in four decades.

At twenty, he had written the "Venus and Adonis;" at thirty,

"Titus Andronicus," and the "Comedy of Errors;" at forty, "Romeo and Juliet," the "Merchant of Venice," the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and those strange revelations, the "Sonnets;" had built a new theatre, and brought out "Hamlet." At fifty, he had produced "Macbeth," "King Lear," "Julius Cæsar," "Antony and Cleopatra," and "The Tempest;" had purchased the best house in Stratford, had disposed of his daughter in marriage, become a grandfather, and had quitted the profession with an income of five hundred pounds a year.

Two years after this he died of a fever, and was buried at Stratford. Seven years afterwards appeared the first edition of his plays.

Shakspeare was a handsome, well-shaped man, with eyes of a light hazel colour, and hair and beard of auburn hue; "very good company, and "of a very ready and pleasant and smooth wit."

It is doubtful whether he ever sat for a portrait. Whatever exists of him was probably drawn from memory. The most authentic likeness is said to be the bust upon his tomb at Stratford, yet this was made seven years after his death. Of this statue it is said, "the contour of "the head is very fine; the lips are carefully carved, the nose slightly "curtailed."

Next comes the portrait engraved at the head of the folio edition, and this has in its favour the testimony of Ben Jonson.

While the best known, unquestionably, is the Chandos, the magnificent oil painting, now displayed at the South Kensington Museum.

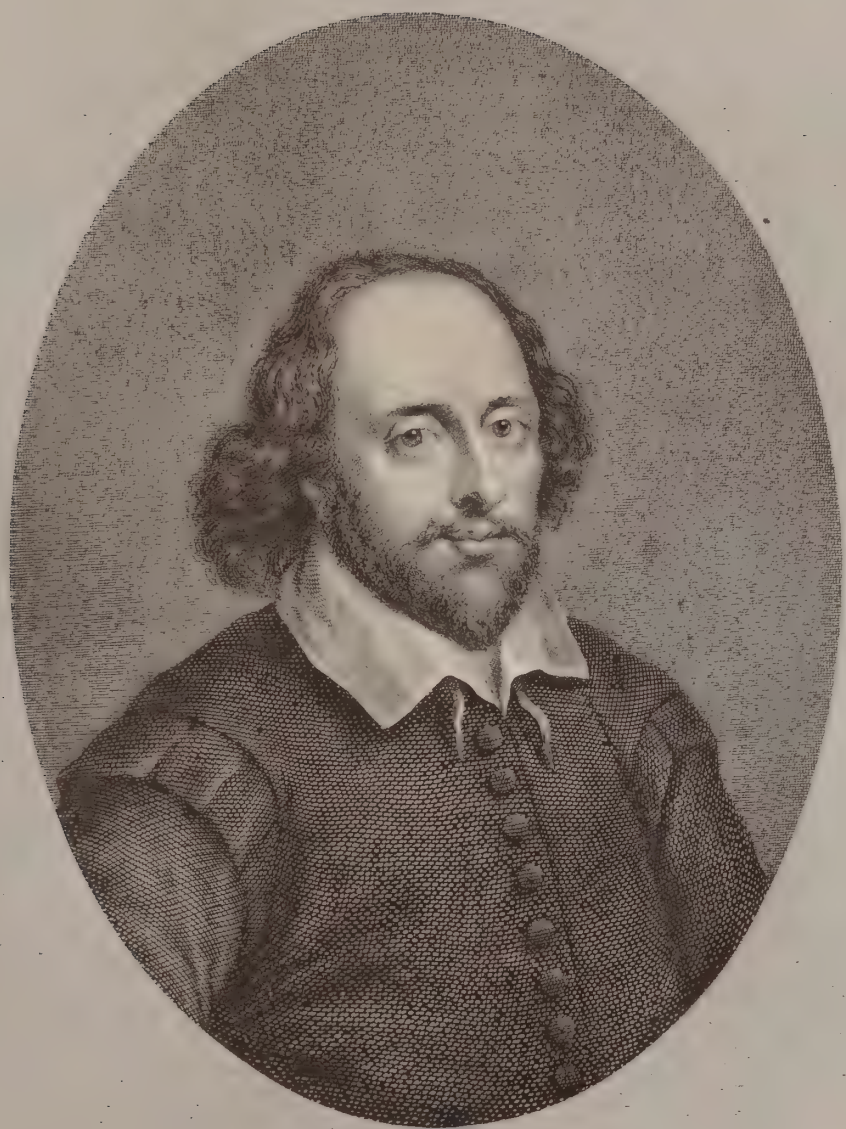
Still more highly idealised is the Jansen portrait. Of this portrait, alleged to have been painted by Jansen, for the Earl of Southampton, from life, it has been observed:—"Nothing can more distinctly embody our "conceptions of Shakspeare. It is extremely handsome; the forehead "elevated and ample, the eyes clear, mild and benignant; the nose well "formed, the mouth closed, the lips slightly compressed, the hair receding "from the forehead, as of one who will soon be bald; the beard gracefully "disposed, and a very neat lace collar thrown over such a dress as the Poet "might be supposed to wear. Indeed, at this period the Players in general "are censured for being splendidly dressed in silks and satins."

Probably, when all the evidence both internal and external is weighed, we may safely accept the following conclusion: the Jansen is the ideal Shakspeare, the folio print is the real Shakspeare.



SHAKSPEARE

THE CHANDOS



SHAKSPEARE

THE JANSEN



Such was the man of whom there have been written—not volumes, but libraries.

His favourite books were Plutarch and Montaigne; his hero was Julius Cæsar; his aversion was the Puritan spirit; his greatest creation was “Hamlet.”

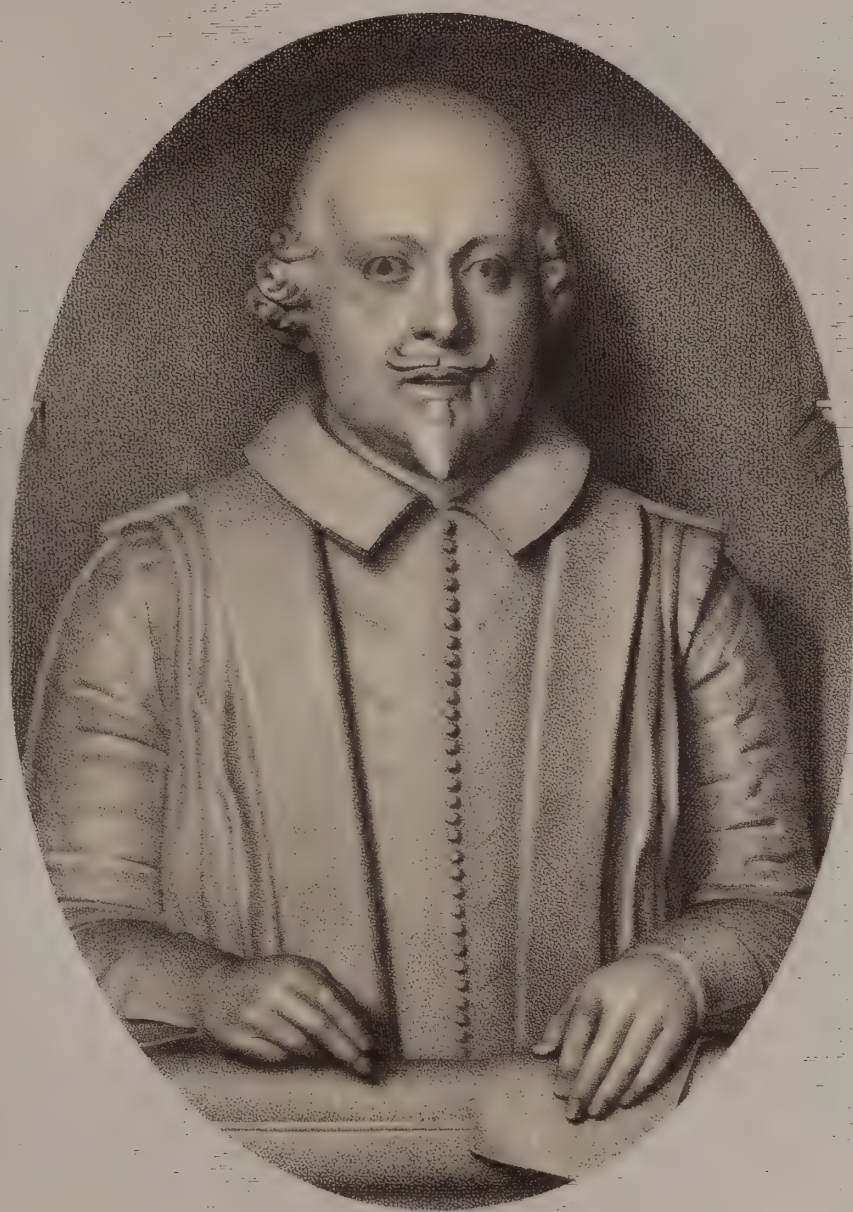
The peculiar quality of his mind has been expressed in three words—a complete imagination.

In reality, that which we think of, first and last, in connection with Shakspeare, is his creation of characters. Taine in his “English Literature” groups them into five classes: brutes and idiots, like Caliban, Ajax, Cloten, Polonius, and the Nurse; people of wit—like Mercutio, Beatrice, Rosalind, Benedict, the Clown, and Falstaff; women—Desdemona, Juliet, Miranda, Imogen, Cordelia, Ophelia, Volumnia; villains—Iago, and Richard III.; characters of an excessive or diseased imagination—Lear, Othello, Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Macbeth, Hamlet. All these he finds united in their Author. “Go through the groups, and you will only discern in them divers forms and divers states of the same power: here the flock of brutes, dotards, and gossips made up of a mechanical imagination; further on, the company of men of wit, animated by a gay and foolish imagination; then the charming swarm of women, whom their delicate imagination raises so high, and their self-forgetting love carries so far; elsewhere, the band of villains, hardened by unbridled passions, inspired by the artist’s imagination; in the centre, the mournful train of grand characters whose excited brain is filled with excited or criminal visions, and whom an inner destiny urges to murder, madness, or death. . . . An opera without music—a concert of melancholy and tender sentiment, which bears the mind into the supernatural world, and brings before the mind, on its fairy wings, the genius which has created it.”



SHAKSPEARE

THE STRATFORD-ON-AVON BUST



SHAKSPEARE

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE



1564	BORN AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON.		
1582	MARRIED	AGE	18
1586	WENT TO LONDON	„	22
1589	ACTOR AND PLAYWRIGHT AT BLACKFRIARS THEATRE	„	25
1593	‘VENUS AND ADONIS’	„	29
1594	‘RAPE OF LUCRECE’	„	30
1597	PURCHASED ‘NEW PLACE,’ STRATFORD	„	33
1598	COMEDIES, ‘ROMEO AND JULIET’ AND ‘MERCHANT OF VENICE,’ PREVIOUS TO	„	34
1601	‘TWELFTH NIGHT’	„	37
1602	‘HAMLET’	„	38
1614	RETIRED TO STRATFORD	„	40
1607	‘KING LEAR’	„	43
1611	‘TEMPEST’	„	47
1618	DIED AT STRATFORD	„	54



И С Т О Ч Н И К И:

AS A CH



MILTON

AS A CHILD

MILTON

1608-1674

POET OF THE PURITANS

MILTON was born in London. His father, whose conversion to Protestantism had cost him his fortune, had embraced the profession of Notary, and by incessant activity had acquired a competency, sufficient to place the family in comfortable circumstances, and to give the son a sound education by a good tutor under the paternal roof.

The boy's first preceptor was Thomas Young, a man whose religious austerity exercised a great influence upon the mind and destiny of his pupil. Study shortly became a passion for the ardent young spirit; and already in early years we perceive the germs of that double exaltation, poetic and religious, which was to stamp the character of his genius.

The romances of Chivalry, the heroic poems of Homer, Virgil, and Dante, and the Bible, were his choice in reading. They became profoundly engraved in his memory, and were always the favourite sources from which he drew his inspirations.

At sixteen he was sent to Cambridge, at which place he became noted for his verses and his erudition, was made Master of Arts at twenty-four,

and had thoughts of becoming a clergyman. This step, however, his love of liberty would not permit him to take. He decided to devote a few years to enlarging the circle of his acquirements. Already he read Homer, Virgil, and Dante, in their own language; he now learned Hebrew, so as to read the Bible in the original text, but his time was chiefly given to the study of the best Greek and Latin authors. It was at this period also that he composed his best miscellaneous poems—"Comus," "Lycidas," &c. After the death of his mother, in 1637, he resolved to complete his knowledge by making the grand classical tour.

He visited France, and was presented to Grotius. Arriving in Italy, he went first to Pisa, then to Florence. Several times he saw Galileo. From Florence he went to Rome. Here he had access to the splendid Vatican Library; here he contemplated the walls of the Sixtine Chapel, covered with the frescoes of Michael Angelo—saw the Madonnas of the divine Raphael, saw his Transfiguration, and the Loggie, that extraordinary work—the whole Bible translated into pictures. Here also he saw the Miracle Play of the "Disobedience of Adam and Eve."

Already to his mind came the ideas of the "Paradise Lost."

But Milton was not all poet. Trouble fell upon England in 1639. Milton was now thirty, the age of intellectual virility; he had a profound erudition, extensive knowledge fortified by travel and the contemplation of art. He felt himself ready to take a part in the coming struggle. He threw himself into the *melée*, launching his first bolt, "Reformation in England." He followed it by "The Prelatical Episcopacy," and "Church Government against Prelaty."

"How to solder, how to stop a leak, how to keep up the floating
"carcase of a crazy and diseased monarchy or state betwixt wind and
"water, swimming still upon her own dead lees—that now is the deep
"design of a politician. . . .

"Of this third and last sort that hinder reformation. . . . What
"they can bring up now from the schools of Loyola and the Jesuits, or
"their Malvezzi, that can cut Tacitus into slivers and steaks, we shall
"presently hear."

The blow struck home; it created the celebrated remonstrance of the Long Parliament. That document was a paraphrase of Milton's pamphlets.

Four years from this time Milton married. The union was not



MILTON

AT TWENTY



happy; we find the wife returning to her parents, and the husband writing pamphlets in favour of divorce. Afterwards he took a "noble revenge" in sheltering the deserted wife with all her family, who were Royalists, from the dangers of the democratic faction.

In the years 1651-52 we see him justifying in other pamphlets the execution of the King, and defending the people's cause. He becomes Cromwell's secretary, and achieves the summit of a political reputation. The political prose writings of the author of "Paradise Lost" form six thick octavo volumes. On the death of Cromwell, the veteran made a last appeal in favour of the dying Republic.

In 1660 Charles the Second entered London in triumph. Milton was incarcerated as an accomplice of regicides, yet liberated by the exertion of a brother poet. The rest of his life was passed in retirement. It was then, when full of years, that he produced the "Paradise Lost," "Paradise Regained," and the "Samson." All know of his troubles and infirmities, of the tender care of his two daughters. To his contemporaries the old man was not the poet, but the political pamphleteer, the statesman, and friend of Cromwell.

"What! you let the villain go unpunished?" asks the Duke of York of Charles the Second.—"He is punished enough," replies the easy monarch; "he is poor, old, and blind."

In person, Milton was of middle height, well built, muscular, and compact, a swordsman, his gait erect and manly. He had a ruddy complexion, long brown hair, eyes grey and vivid; he was musical, being a singer, and a performer on the organ and bass viol.

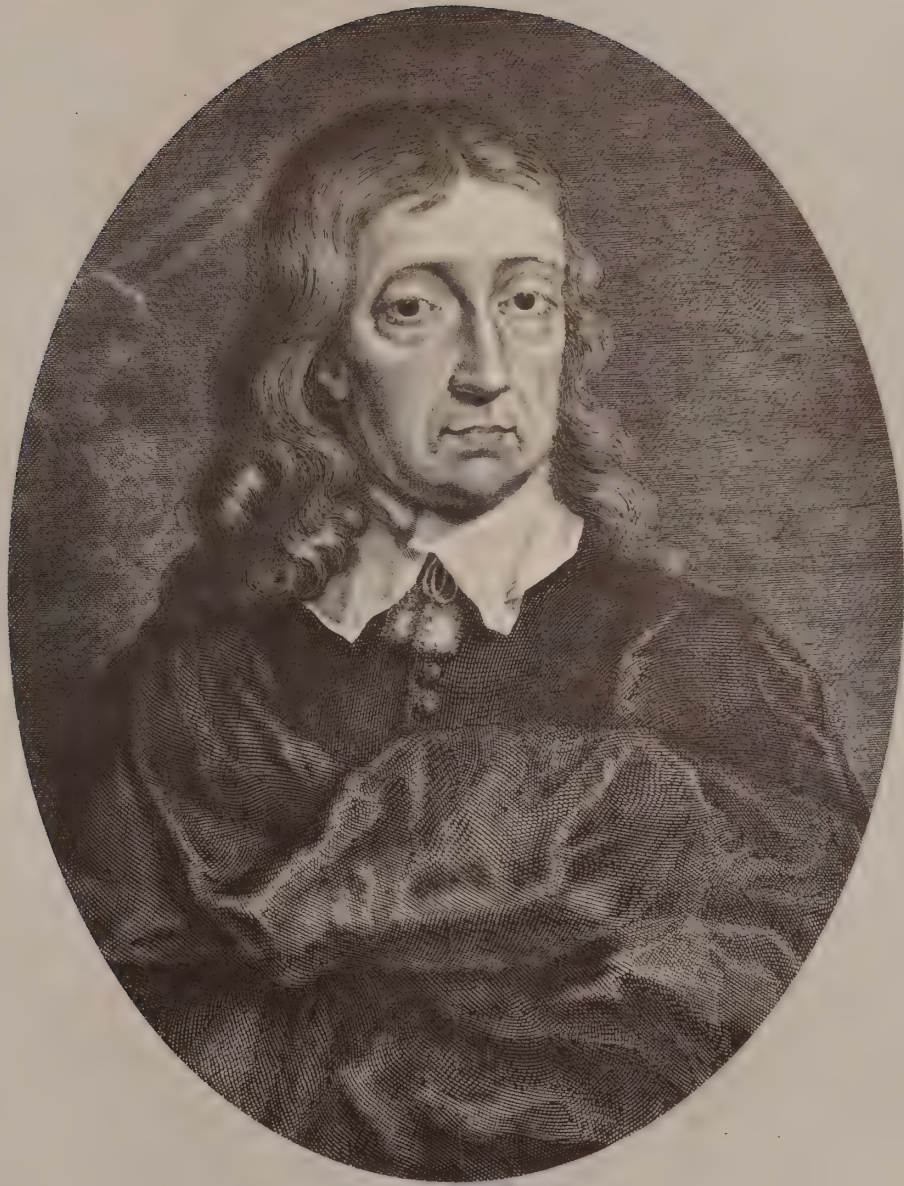
In later years he retired at nine, and rose at five, and dined at one. One of his favourite virtues was abstinence in diet.

"In his whole deportment there was a certain dignity of mind, a "something of conscious superiority, which could not be at all times suppressed, or wholly withdrawn from observation."

A faint, circular portrait of John Milton, showing his face and hair, centered on the page.

MILTON

"AT SIXTY"



M I L T O N

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE



1608	BORN IN LONDON.		
1620	WENT TO ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL	AGE	12
1624	ENTERED CAMBRIDGE	„	16
1628	B.A.	„	20
1629	'ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY' .	„	21
1634	'COMUS' WRITTEN	„	26
1637	TRAVELLED IN ITALY	„	29
1638	'LYCIDAS'	„	30
1641	'REFORMATION IN ENGLAND'; 'PRELITICAL EPI- SCOPACY'; 'REASON OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT'	„	33
1642	'APOLOGY FOR SMECTYMNUS'	„	34
1644	'TRACTATE ON EDUCATION'; 'AREOPAGITICA'; 'DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF DIVORCE' .	„	36
1645	'L'ALLEGRO' AND 'IL PENNEROSO'	„	37
1648	'TENURE OF KINGS AND MAGISTRATES' . . .	„	40
1649	LATIN SECRETARY TO COUNCIL OF STATE; 'EIKO- NOKLASTES'	„	41
1650	'DEFENSIO POPULI ANGLICANI'	„	42
1654	SECOND 'DEFENSIO POPULI ANGLICANI'; BECOMES BLIND	„	46
1659	'CIVIL POWER IN ECCLESIASTICAL CAUSES' . .	„	51
1667	'PARADISE LOST'	„	59
1670	'HISTORY OF ENGLAND'	„	62
1671	'PARADISE REGAINED'; 'SAMSON AGONISTES' .	„	63
1673	'TREATISE ON TRUE RELIGION'	„	65
1674	DIED IN LONDON	„	66

MOLIÈRE

1622-1673

GREATEST FRENCH DRAMATIST

THE Comic French Dramatic Poet was born in Paris in 1622, the eldest of ten children. His father, Jean Poquelin, was an upholsterer in the service of the King, and intended his son should follow the same profession; still he appears to have given him an excellent education at the College of Clermont. As in the case of so many other famous men, little is known of his early life. The popular histories of Molière are said to be false. As an example, it is said that at fourteen Molière could scarcely read or write, and that he owed his education to the influence of his grandfather, who frequently took him to the theatre, and obtained permission to send him to college.

One thing is certain, Molière had a thorough tutor in the person of Pierre Gassendi, that man of liberal education who so early set himself in opposition to the dogmatic authority of Aristotle, and to Descartes' theory of innate ideas. There is nothing, he asserted, in the mind but what the senses have put there; and the duty of a true philosopher is, not to swear by authority, however great, but to pick and choose for himself from the best. The Epicurean doctrine. There can be no doubt Molière owed his

independent judgment and sarcastic vein to the influence of this man. "From his master," says Sainte-Beuve, "he took, not the atoms nor the "system of his philosophy, but its spirit."

After leaving college Molière appears to have followed his father's profession a short time, then studied law and theology; but he ended by joining a troupe of strolling players—lured on, it is said, by the blandishments of a pair of pretty eyes, part of the properties of an actress, Mademoiselle Madeleine Béjart. With this troupe he travelled about France for twelve years (1646 to 1658), assuming the name of Molière, which he added to his own, Jean Baptiste Poquelin. During this time he wrote for his company many little pieces in the style of the Italian farces and interludes, and attempted one tragedy. This proved a lamentable failure, and taught him a lesson as to the true path to follow.

In 1658, through the influence of a former fellow-student, he obtained permission to open a theatre in Paris, under the patronage of the King; and during a period of less than fifteen years he wrote more than thirty comedies, half of which still remain the masterpieces of the French stage.

Here, beneath the approving glance of the great Louis, he brought out his "Hypochondriac," his "Misanthrope," his "Miser," "Hypocrite," his "Parvenu," his "Blue Stockings"—all masterpieces of French ridicule. Ever seeking out vice but to scourge her, he offended all classes of society; but he pleased the King, and the King was the State. Yet the Academy did not open its doors to the great genius; and he was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Paris, and denied a Christian burial.

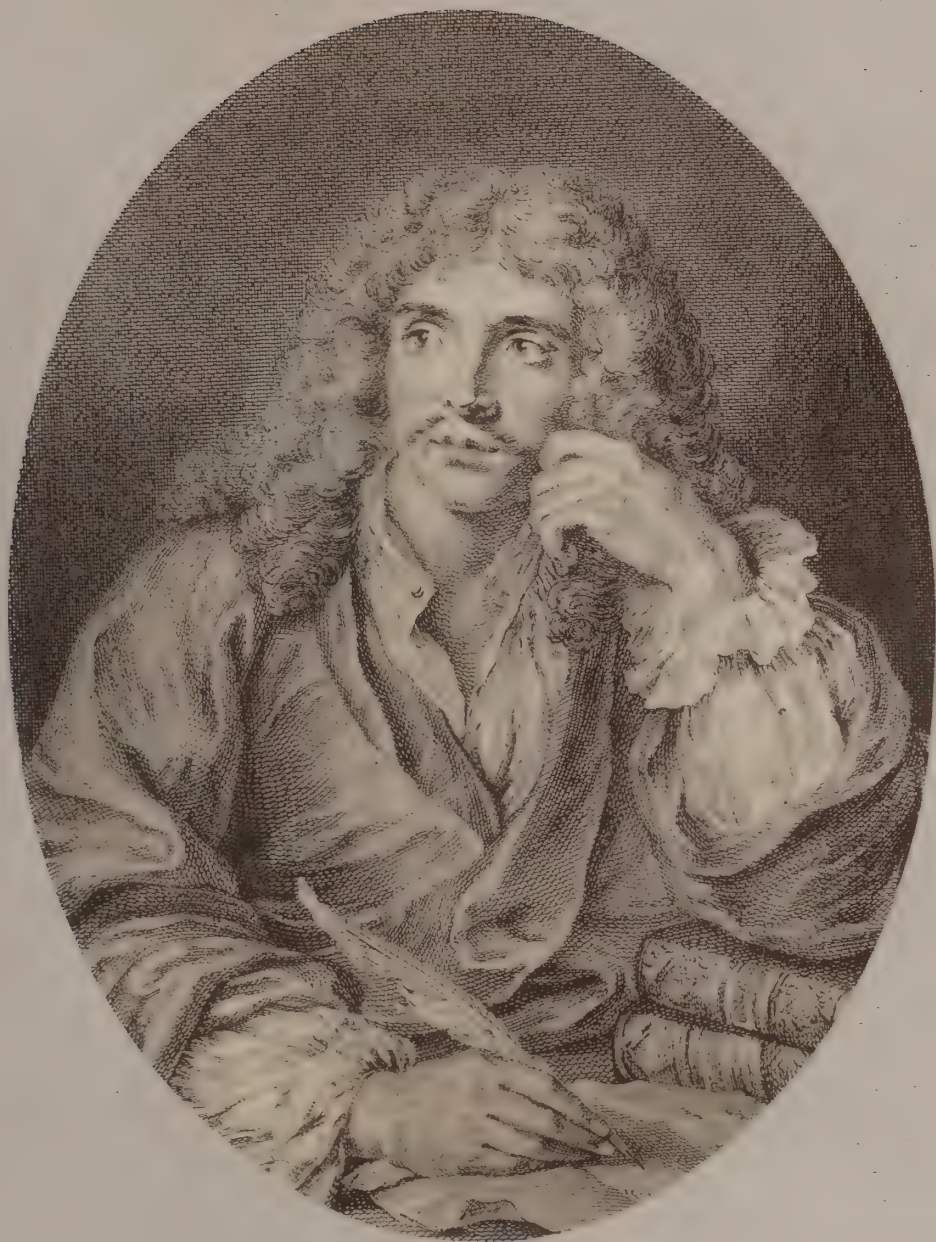
In 1662 he had married Armande Béjart, he being forty, and his wife eighteen. She was the sister of his old love, Madeleine. The disparity of their ages subjected him to ridicule, and gave him fits of jealousy, which were by no means without cause. Ten years later he died suddenly, attacked by hemorrhage of the lungs whilst playing a part in one of his own pieces. By command of the King, to whom Madame Molière had appealed, permission was given to bury the body in the cemetery of St. Joseph. This was effected at night, in the presence of a few friends.

Molière had three children, one of whom, a daughter, survived him, but died childless.

In person the dramatist was tall and well formed. He walked gravely, and with serious mien. His features were peculiar—the nose and mouth



MOLIÈRE



large, the lips thick, the complexion brown. His eyelashes were heavy and black, and by their mobility he could give his face a very comic expression.

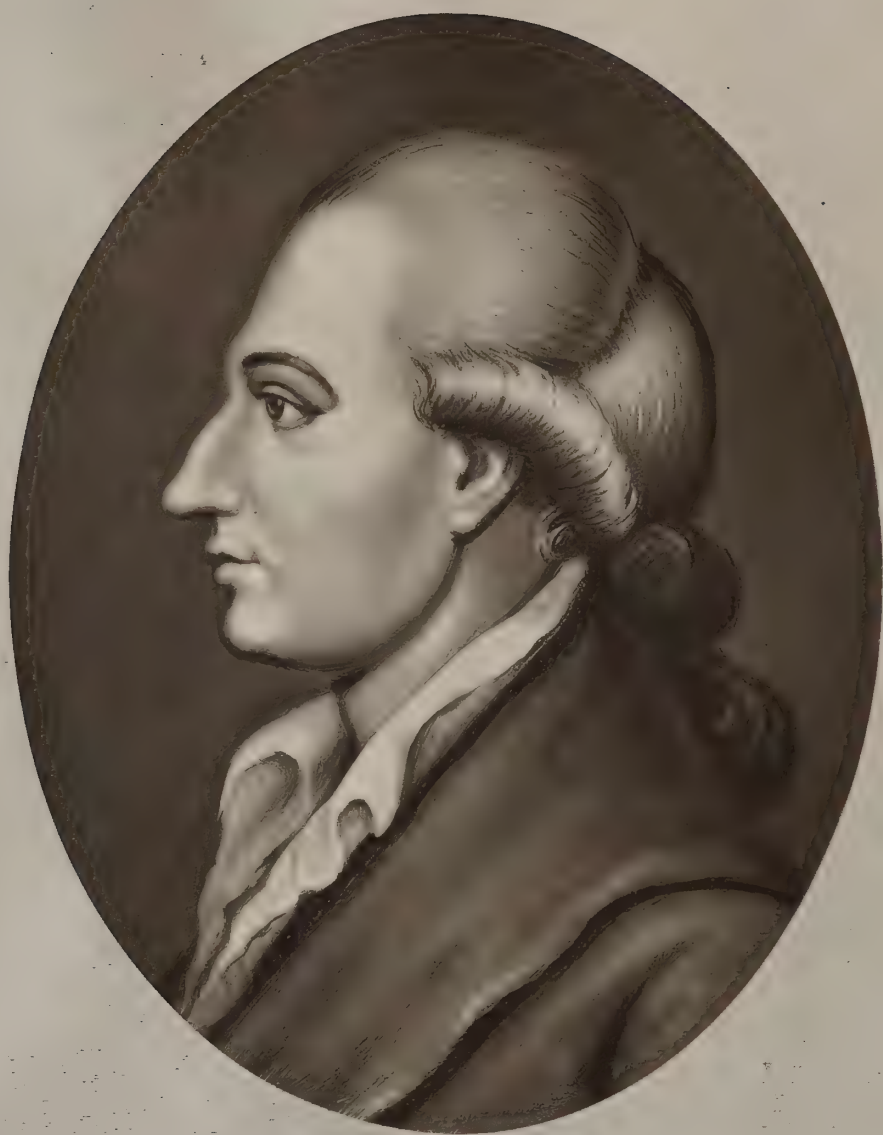
Critics compare Molière with Shakspeare, and find him not unlike in position, character, and qualities. No modern poet equals these two in knowledge of men and motives. On the other hand, he is compared with Dante; and here is found a contrast, yet an analogy. Dante is the artistic representative of tradition and dogma; Molière is the artistic representative of something which is its opposite. What Dante has done for the Catholic traditions of the Middle Ages, Molière has done for the universal precepts of common sense. "He has seized everywhere the features which serve to form a complete picture of human life."

To know him is to hate hypocrisy, fanaticism, and intolerance, and recognise pedantry and false wit at a glance—to be above the deception of fine-drawn expressions, and the painted graces of an artificial style. Hypocrisy he especially detested, and lashed it without mercy in all its varied forms, wherever he found it. It is to Molière, more perhaps than to any other writer, that the French language owes its tendency to run into apt sayings—the small change of conversation—which has made it the favourite language of polite society.

CHRONOLOGY OF MOLIÈRE'S LIFE.

1622	Birth of Molière at Paris.								
1641	Leaves College of Clermont	.	.	.	.	.	.	Aged 19	
1642	Attends Louis XIII. to Spain	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 20	
1658	Presented to Louis XIV.	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 36	
1659	The "Précieuses Ridicules."	Great success	.	.	.	.	.	" 37	
1662	His marriage. "École des Femmes"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 40	
1666	The "Misanthrope"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 44	
1667	"Tartuffe"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 45	
1668	"L'Avare"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 46	
1670	"Bourgeoise Gentilhomme"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 47	
1672	"Femmes Savantes"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 50	
1673	"Malade Imaginaire"	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 51	
1673	Death at Paris	.	.	.	.	.	.	" 51	

1622	BORN AT PARIS.								
1636-41	STUDIED AT COLLÈGE DE CLERMONT.							AGE 14-19	
1642	ATTENDED LOUIS XIII. TO SPAIN							20	
1653	'L'ÉTOURDI'							31	
1654	'DÉPIT AMOUREUX'							32	
1658	PRESENTED TO LOUIS XIV.							36	
1659	'PRÉCIEUSES RIDICULES'							37	
1660	SETTLED AT THE PALAIS ROYAL							38	
1661	'ÉCOLE DES MARIS'							39	
1662	'ÉCOLE DES FEMMES'							40	
1663	'CRITIQUE DE L'ÉCOLE DES FEMMES'							41	
1666	'MISANTHROPE'; 'MÉDECIN MALGRÉ LUI'							44	
1667	'TARTUFFE'							45	
1668	'AVARE'							46	
1670	'BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME'							48	
1672	'FEMMES SAVANTES'							50	
1673	'MALADE IMAGINAIRE'							51	
1673	DIED AT PARIS							51	



GOETHE

1749-1832

GOETHE

JOHN WOLFGANG GOETHE was born at Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, on March 28, 1749. Accustomed from infancy to a life of seclusion and combat, his youth was not like that of many of his contemporaries, but more earnest, and a trained studious home-life, with a father who was a lawyer and a statesman, to assist and encourage him in his studies. He was a very early reader, and was inspired by his father's example. At the age of sixteen he was sent to the University of Leipzig, where he studied law and literature. Next year he read Sophocles and Euripides, and then he read the Bible and the Greek and Hebrew to study the language of the Bible. He had made considerable progress in Greek, and when he was sent to the University of Leipzig to study law, he had already made considerable progress in Greek.

After a year's study at Leipzig, he went to Strasbourg to qualify himself for the law. He was a very early reader, and was inspired by his father's example. At the age of sixteen he was sent to the University of Leipzig, where he studied law and literature. Next year he read Sophocles and Euripides, and then he read the Bible and the Greek and Hebrew to study the language of the Bible. He had made considerable progress in Greek, and when he was sent to the University of Leipzig to study law, he had already made considerable progress in Greek.



GOETHE

YOUNG.

GOETHE

1749-1832

“GREATEST INTELLECTUAL POWER OF OUR AGE”

JOHN WOLFGANG GOETHE was born at Frankfort-on-the-Main in 1749. Accustomed from infancy to a life of ease and comfort, his youth was not, like that of many of his compeers, a struggle for mere existence; but a tranquil studious home-life, with a mother, for whom he felt the strongest affection, to assist and encourage him; to which a stimulus was added in the respect and awe inspired by his father. When, at sixteen, he was sent to the University of Leipzig, Goethe was already a linguist. Not only could he read Sophocles and Ovid in the original, but had also learned sufficient Hebrew to study the beauties of the Bible in the Hebrew text; he had made fair progress in English; and from Racine he had been accustomed to recite passages from childhood.

After three years' study at Leipzig, he went to Strassburg, to qualify himself for the law, in obedience to the wishes of his father. Here, whether neglecting his law studies or not, he certainly found time to indulge his tastes in cultivating literature and the fine arts. Strassburg Cathedral singularly interested him, so did the town, the Rhine, the Black Forest,

and indeed the whole neighbourhood, which became, in his youthful imagination, a "poetic paradise." In 1771, when twenty-two years of age, he took his degree as Doctor of Laws, and left Strassburg for Wetzlar, then the seat of the Imperial Chamber of the German Empire—ostensibly to gain experience in law, but in reality to continue his erratic studies in whatever subject interested him. In 1772 he returned to Frankfort, and remained at home four years. It was during this interval he began the publication of his earliest successful works. His first dramatic essay, "Goetz von Berlichingen," drew instant attention, by its grand ideas, profound sentiments, natural vigour, and its bold defiance of French criticism and the three unities.

The romance of "Werther," which followed "Goetz," threw all Germany into a ferment, and made him at once a literary lion. Translated into many languages and dramatised, commentaries, imitations, and even parodies, attested its popularity. His admirers demanded with insistence that he should continue in the same strain. "Heaven forbid," said Goethe afterwards, "that I should ever find myself in the state of mind requiring the "composition of another such work."

A drama called "Stella," written in 1775, paints another love adventure at Strassburg. Goethe made every incident of his life, when it could be artistically treated, the basis of a play or story. After writing "Werther," Goethe hesitated long in deciding what career he should adopt, and, finally, accepting an invitation to Weimar, went there in 1775 to reside permanently.

Here for eleven years he lived at the Ducal court, loved the Frau von Stein, and made discoveries in science—the intermaxillary bone in man, the metamorphosis of plants, many facts in relation to colour. He held it to be an axiom, that "the law of unity presides in the structure "of all living bodies." In his work on the "Metamorphosis of Plants" (1790), Goethe applied this principle to the vegetable world, to show that a flower is developed from a leaf by a series of gradual changes—a theory which has now become an accepted truth.

In 1786 a visit to Italy gave fresh impetus to Goethe's literary and poetic instincts. He visited Rome, Naples, Florence, and Sicily, drawing inspiration from all he saw. The influence of this voyage seems impressed on all his after labours. At Rome he terminated his play of "Iphigenie,"



GOETHE

AT FORTY



that "marriage between the religious philosophy of Germany and the "ancient Greek tragedy." "Egmont" followed "Iphigenie," and "Tasso" appeared in 1790.

Perhaps the most interesting period in Goethe's life is between 1794 and 1805, during his intimacy with Schiller, the poet. This friendship proved very useful to both—it gave a stimulus to their literary activity. While Goethe, without wholly renouncing the drama, applied himself especially to romances and epic compositions, Schiller, during these eleven years, composed his finest tragedies. "Wilhelm Meister," a work Goethe had commenced long before, was now completed; so was the first part of "Faust;" and "Hermann and Dorothea," was published in 1797.

Wilhelm Meister is a young merchant whose ambition it is to be an artist, and who pursues this illusive calling through many changing adventures, until he finally discovers his real vocation to be the practice of medicine. "It is a work full of subtle and profound analysis, with admirable "descriptive scenes." The episode of Mignon is one of the finest poetic creations of modern literature. Though this work may be considered the result of Goethe's reflections and sentiments over a period of forty years, still it lacks the earnestness, passion, and dramatic interest which gave "Werther" such a remarkable popularity.

If the "Meister" is in some sense unsatisfactory, his next work makes up the deficiency. The "Hermann and Dorothea" is a marvellous union of grace and grandeur—the picture of the pure and simple life of a German village girl, a dream of the golden age, appearing in Europe just on the eve of the mighty political changes produced by the French Revolution. In German hands this poem has become a complete commentary on the philosophy of art.

Five years later—two years after the death of Schiller—was published Goethe's masterpiece, "Faust." "For more than thirty years this work had "been growing in the author's mind." Part of it had been written in his visit to Switzerland; the general idea had been conceived when a student at college. "The peculiarities of a man's organisation and "education," says Lewes, "invest certain subjects with a charm and a "significance. Such was 'Der Freischütz' for Weber; the 'Maternity of "the Madonna' for Raphael; 'Faust' for Goethe. Thus it is that a fine "subject becomes its marble, out of which a lasting monument is carved."

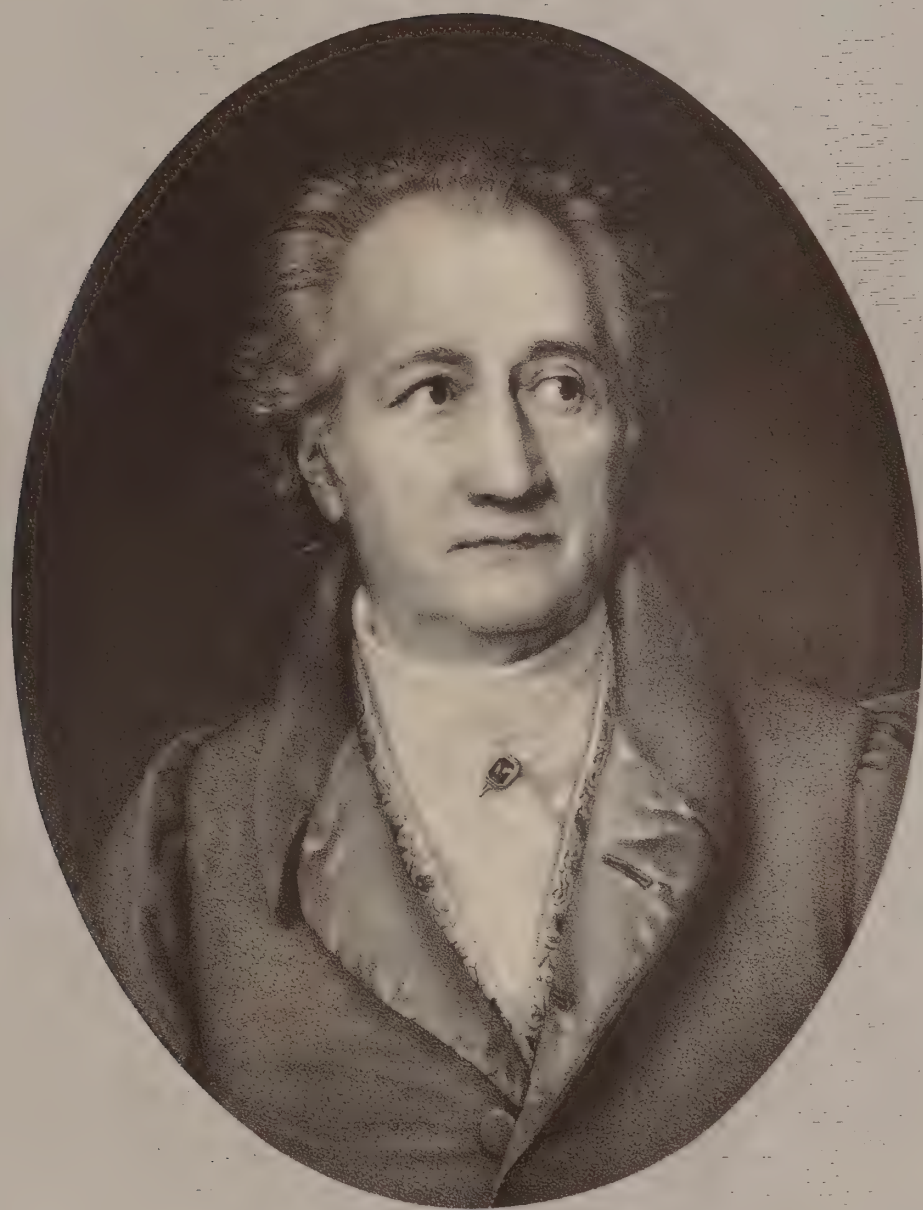
As years increased with Goethe, his literary activity, instead of diminishing, increased with them. "Never hastening, never resting," was his motto. He worked till the last hour, and died sitting in his chair. His last moments are thus described by Lewes:—"Otilie sat beside him, holding his hand in both hers. It was now observed that his thoughts began to wander incoherently. 'See,' he exclaimed, 'the lovely woman's head, with black curls in splendid colours, a dark back-ground.' Presently he saw a piece of paper on the floor, and asked how they could leave Schiller's letters so carelessly lying about. Then he slept softly. . . . The last words audible were, 'MORE LIGHT!' The final darkness grew apace, and he, whose eternal longings had been for more light, gave a parting cry for it as he was passing under the shadow of death."

One of the distinctive characteristics of Goethe's genius was his insatiable curiosity in every branch of human knowledge. His life was equally divided between science and art—between the poetry of the heart and the keenly observant spirit of an enthusiastic lover of nature. He was so versatile, so many-sided, he did so many things well, and initiated so much, that it is difficult to say in what he was greatest. His "Goetz von Berlichingen" founded the romantic school; "Werther" founded the sentimental school; the "Metamorphosis of Plants" is one of the pillars of Darwinism; and in the third act of "Faust" critics have discovered the "foundation of a creed." It is not possible to read one of his works without learning a lesson of life. We try to sum it all up by calling him "The greatest intellectual power of our age."



GOETHE

"AT EIGHTY"



G O E T H E

C H R O N O L O G Y O F H I S L I F E



1749	BORN AT FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN.		
1765	STUDIED AT LEIPSIC	AGE	16
1768	RETURNED TO FRANKFORT	„	19
1770	ENTERED STRASBURG UNIVERSITY	„	21
1773	‘GÖTZ VON BERLICHINGEN’	„	24
1774	‘LEIDEN DES JUNGEN WERTHER’; VISITED SWITZER- LAND	„	25
1775	SETTLED AT WEIMAR	„	26
1777-8	VISITED THE HARZ AND BERLIN	„	28-9
1779	PRIVY COUNCILLOR	„	30
1786-8	TRAVELLED IN ITALY; ‘EGMONT’	„	37-9
1787	‘IPHIGENIA AUF TAURIS’	„	38
1788	MET SCHILLER	„	39
1790	VISITED ITALY AGAIN; ‘TORQUATO TASSO’; ‘FAUST’; ‘VERSUCH DIE METAMORPHOSE DER PFLANZEN ZU ERKLÄREN’	„	41
1791	DIRECTOR OF COURT THEATRE, WEIMAR.	„	42
1794	‘WILHELM MEISTER’S LEHRJAHRE’	„	45
1797	‘HERMANN UND DOROTHEA’	„	48
1806	MARRIED	„	57
1810	‘FARBENLEHRE’	„	61
1811	‘DICHTUNG UND WAHRHEIT’	„	62
1821	‘WILHELM MEISTER’S WANDERJAHRE’	„	72
1827	KNIGHT OF GRAND CROSS OF BAVARIA	„	78
1830	DIED AT WEIMAR	„	81

SCOTT

1771-1832

FOUNDER OF THE HISTORIC NOVEL

SIR WALTER SCOTT was born at Edinburgh. His father held a government office, and his mother was the daughter of a distinguished physician. The Scott family had taken an active part in the Border Wars; and the traditions of those troublesome times, preserved in ballad and story, made a strong impression on the young poet's imagination. Lame from childhood, his parents sent him into the country for the benefit of his health, where he developed a taste for reading books of all kinds, more especially romances and poetry, and tales of chivalry.

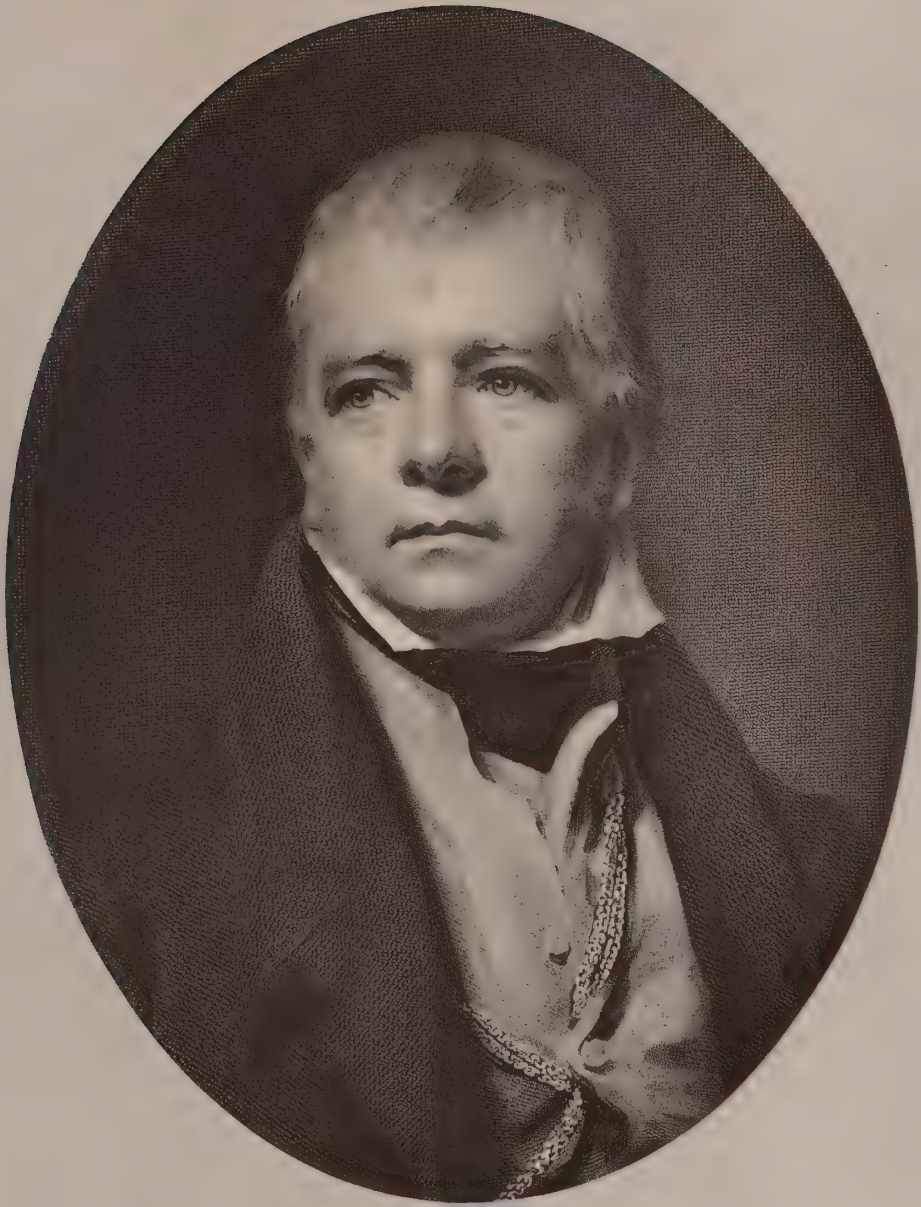
At school his masters had not a high opinion of his capacity, as he was somewhat dull in classical studies; but his fellow-students admired him for his talent in story-telling. His thirst for reading led him to study modern languages, and he learned French, German, and Italian, sufficiently well to read romances in them. On leaving college he adopted the law as a profession (1792); but the theatre, clubs, literary society, and reading, absorbed much the greater part of his time. His vacations he spent in travelling through highland and lowland, making himself

familiar with places, types of character, traditions, ballads, faces, and the manners of the people he has so well described in his stories.

In 1799 he obtained the place of Sheriff to the county of Selkirk, and later, 1806, that of Clerk of Sessions; one of them he held for twenty years, and the other until his death. Together they brought him an income of £1600 a year. It was, however, from literature that Scott was destined to acquire fortune and reputation. Setting aside some earlier works which met with little success, his songs of the Scottish Borders (published in 1800-3) first drew attention by their graceful blending of antiquarian knowledge with imagination, a characteristic of the author's genius. The literary life of Scott may be divided into three parts:—First, when he established his reputation as a poet; this extends from his translations of Bürger, in 1796, to the publication of “Waverley,” in 1814. The second, from 1814 to the failure of his partner, Constable, the publisher, in 1826: during this period he composed a rapid and brilliant succession of romances. Third, and last, the period of the Herculean labours to which he devoted himself to re-establish his fortune, compromised in the crisis of 1826: this ended only with his death, in 1832. Notwithstanding the merit of his poems, his success as an author was not fairly assured until the appearance of the romance of “Waverley,” in 1814. This and the series which followed it, ending with the masterpiece, “Ivanhoe,” 1820, had an immense sale, and brought their author a world-wide reputation. Counterfeit editions, translations in most European languages, dramatised versions, and others embellished by the art of painting and music, attested the strong interest which every one felt for the scenes and manners of what was, up to this time, nearly an unknown country; where under new and strange local colouring, the author had found and described the noblest and most generous characteristics of the human race.

This period (1814-1826) was the apogee of the author's fortune and reputation. His works brought him an annual revenue of £10,000. He was received with honour at London and Paris (1815), by Royalty, and notabilities of all professions; created a baronet in 1819; and visited at his residence, Abbotsford, by a crowd of literary pilgrims and crowned heads; while the best painters of the day, Lawrence and Chantry, drew his portrait. His income, far greater than that of any earlier writer, should have assured him an easy and comfortable existence, had he not





carried into real life, and sought to realise, the imaginative dreams of the novelist. He determined to build a "romance in stone and mortar," a noble castle, where he could receive his guests with the magnificent hospitality of a lord of the olden time. On the Tweed near Melrose this castle was built, and named "Abbotsford." The costs were heavy, and to assist in paying these he became a partner in two publishing firms, Ballantyne and Constable. The failure of these houses, in the commercial crisis of 1826, rendered Scott liable for a sum of £117,000. With what an honourable spirit he laboured to pay that debt, how his health broke down, how he vainly sought restoration in a voyage to Italy, we all have heard. The debt was paid, though it cost him his life. It was too late; and he returned to his castle, his trees, and cherished books, only to die in 1832.

From Cassell's *Cyclopædia of English Literature* we take the following extracts, cited from various sources, showing the appreciation of Scott's genius:—

"Sir Walter Scott is universally considered as the greatest writer of imagination of this century; and his reputation has been so wide-spread and lasting, that it may reasonably be anticipated that it will not materially decline in succeeding times."

"No writer ever exercised a greater influence over the public mind, or led to so much conscious or unconscious imitation."

"If we look at the variety and richness of his gallery, at his command over pathos and terror, the laughter and the tears; at the many large interests besides those of romance which he realises to us; at the way in which he paints the whole life of men—not their humours and passions alone; at his unfailing wholesomeness and freshness, like the sea and air and the elementary forces of nature; it may be pronounced a just estimate which places Scott second in our creative or imaginative literature to Shakspeare. 'All is great in the Waverley novels,' said Goethe, in 1831, 'material, effect, characters, execution!'"

"His writings never foster a bad or throw ridicule on a good or generous feeling."

SCOTT

CHRONOLOGY OF HIS LIFE



1771	BORN AT EDINBURGH.	
1778-83	STUDIED AT HIGH SCHOOL	AGE 7-12
1783	ENTERED COLLEGE	„ 12
1786	APPRENTICED WRITER TO THE SIGNET	„ 15
1792	CALLED TO THE BAR	„ 21
1796	TRANSLATION OF ‘BÜRGER’	„ 26
1799	TRANSLATION OF GOETHE’S ‘GÖTZ VON BERLICH- INGEN’	„ 28
1802	‘BORDER MINSTRELSY’	„ 31
1805	‘LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL’	„ 34
1808	‘MARMION’	„ 37
1809	‘LADY OF THE LAKE’	„ 38
1814	‘WAVERLEY’; ‘LIFE OF SWIFT’	„ 43
1815	‘GUY MANNERING’; VISITED LONDON	„ 44
1816	‘ANTIQUARY’; ‘OLD MORTALITY’	„ 45
1817	‘ROB ROY’	„ 46
1818	‘HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN’	„ 47
1819	‘IVANHOE’; ‘BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR’	„ 48
1821	‘KENILWORTH’; ‘THE PIRATE’	„ 50
1825	VISITED IRELAND; ‘ST. RONAN’S WELL’	„ 54
1827	‘LIFE OF NAPOLEON’; ‘TALES OF A GRANDFATHER’	„ 56
1828	‘FAIR MAID OF PERTH’	„ 57
1832	DIED	„ 61

APPENDIX TO VOLUME I.

SOURCES OF THE PORTRAITS

HOMER.

Line engraving from the antique bust in the British Museum, known as the Townley. Longhi dis. Caporali inc.

2. From the bronze head formerly in the Museum of Dr. Richard Mead. Drawn by Wood, engraved by Baron. Drugulin Collection.

PINDAR.

From an old print in the Drugulin Collection, very sharp. Specimen of early engraving.

ÆSCHYLUS.

Enlarged from a gem, published in Visconti. Longhi dis. Bosa inc. Open letter proof, fine.

SOPHOCLES.

Line engraving from the bust in the Capitoline Museum, Rome. Longhi dis. Bosa inc.

EURIPIDES.

From an early edition of Visconti. The original bust is in Rome. The engraving is coarser than in some of the later editions, but the likeness is better. Hall Collection.

ARISTOPHANES.

The bust in the Galleria del Gr. Duca, Florence. Campiglia del. Gregori sc. Scarce. Didot Collection.

MENANDER.

The statue in the Vatican (*see* Biography). Engraved by A. Aubert. Visconti.

LUCRETIUS.

The original ancient bust is at St. Petersburg. The engraving purchased in Rome. Scarce. The only other portrait of Lucretius is the small gem, in which the drawing is very bad, copied in Munro's Translation.

VIRGIL.

Taken from a gem, size $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. The gem is enlarged by solar camera to two-thirds life size and painted in oil, *grisaille*. The painting is then reduced by the Woodbury process and the engraving made.

DANTE.

1. The exquisite line engraving by Raphael Morghen. For origin of the portrait *see* Biography.

2. From the fresco by Giotto in the chapel of the Bargello at Florence. The present copy was executed previous to the recent restorations which have made the face older and less pleasing.

RABELAIS.

Very fine line, engraved by Tanjé, 1739. Only true likeness of Rabelais, all others are caricatures.

CERVANTES.

Painted by Velasquez, engraved by Leisnier, Paris 1853. Good specimen of modern work.

SHAKESPEARE.

1. The Chandos. Portrait now at South Kensington Museum. Engraved by Houbraken. Scarce.

2. The Jansen (*see* Biography). The engraving is a fine mezzotint.

3. Portrait from the first edition of Shakespeare, with the remarkable lines by Ben Jonson. This is the famous Droeshout print.

4. The Avon Bust (*see* Biography). Has been several times engraved in stipple and mezzotint; the one here given is the best.

MILTON.

1. "As a Child." Bust surrounded by a wreath. The engraving is from a picture long in the possession of the family, and is perfectly authentic.

2. "At Twenty." Engraved by Houbraken from a picture in the collection of the Rt. Hon. Arthur Onslow. When at college, Milton, from his great beauty of feature, was nicknamed "the maiden."

3. "At Sixty." The well-known engraving by Vertue. This and the preceding are the two most costly portraits of Milton.

MOLIÈRE.

From the painting in the Louvre by Coypel. Engraved by Lépicié. The only fine portrait, and scarce. Most portraits of Molière make him resemble a mulatto. One of the portraits sold for Molière is false, being that of a young nobleman whose features resembled those of the dramatist.

GOETHE.

1. "At Twenty-five." G. M. Krauss del. 1776. Portrait of the poet one year after his establishment in Weimar. His actual age is twenty-seven.

2. "At Forty." Painted by Kügelgen, engraved by C. Hess. The engraving is marked "Bei Artaria and Fontaine in Mannheim."

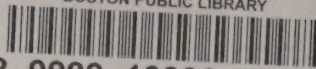
3. "At Eighty." From a painting for which Goethe sat in his eightieth year. The print is modern, an extremely fine lithograph published at Munich. This is the favourite portrait of Goethe.

SCOTT.

Engraved by William Walker from a picture by Sir Henry Raeburn, R.A.

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